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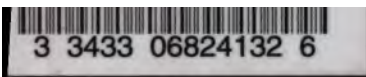
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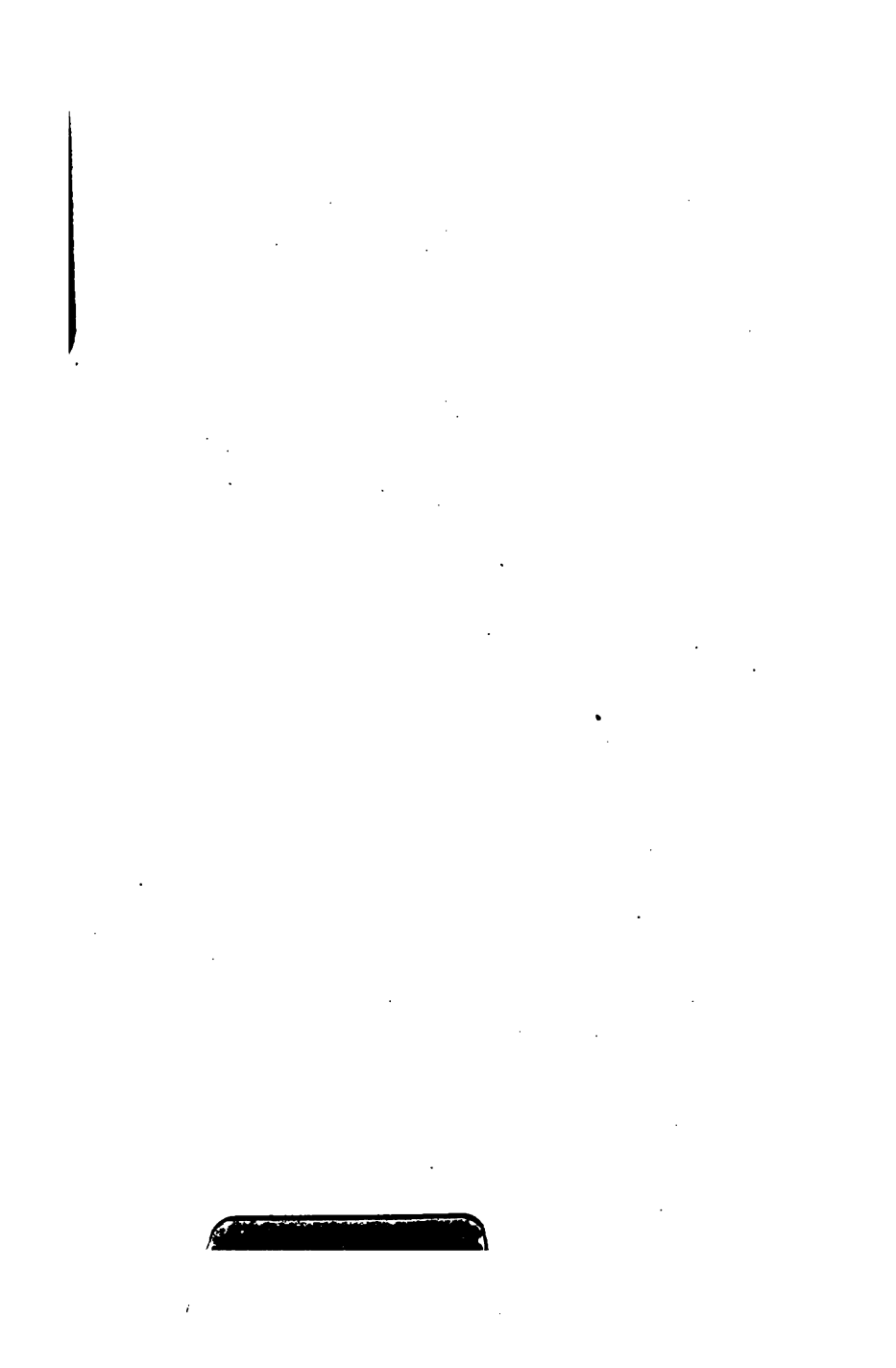
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The Gospel and Philosophy

SIX LECTURES

PREACHED IN TRINITY CHAPEL

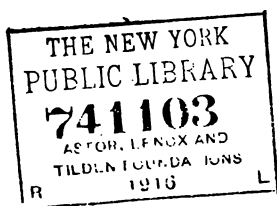
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P R E F A C E .

THE following lectures, with the exception of the sixth, were preached in Trinity Chapel, during the season of Lent, 1880, and soon afterward printed in *The Church Eclectic*, appearing in the successive numbers of that magazine from May to October, inclusive. My apology for repeating them is found in the urgent requests of friends, particularly among the Clergy and Students of theology, that I should put them in a form in which they might be more easily accessible than when hidden away in the files of a monthly publication. Having looked them carefully through, revised them, and made some additions, and having finally decided on discarding one and substituting another for it, written with reference to what seems to me the real ground of our differences to-day, I ventured to preach them again before giving them to the printer. This is their history; and they are now committed to the reader with the hope that they may aid in confirm-

ing souls in the faith, and showing to some that are in error the light of the truth as we have received it from those who, before our day, have most truly represented the mind of the Catholic Church.

There was one point on which I would have said much more, had the time permitted; but since it did not, I have added to the six lectures a sermon preached before the University of the South, at the Annual Commencement of 1885, which the reader is requested kindly to take as a note on some statements in the text which it develops and applies to the experience of the Christian believer.

MORGAN DIX.

TRINITY RECTORY, NEW YORK,
Lent, 1886.

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UNIVERSITY SERMON.

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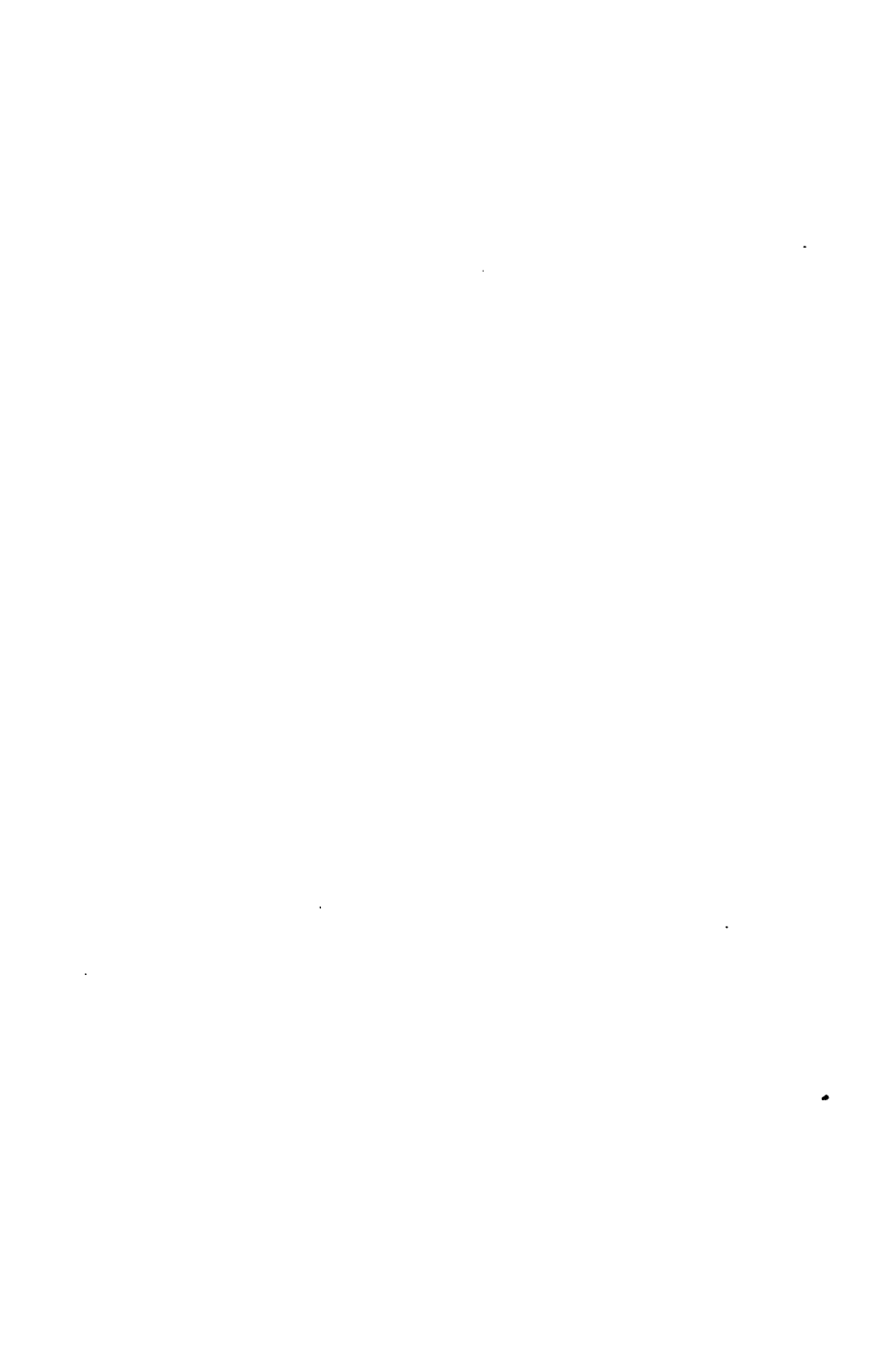
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Christ and Christianity.



LECTURE I.

CHRIST AND CHRISTIANITY.

“ Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ ? ”—
S. MATTHEW xxii. 41, 42.

FIVE years ago, during the season of Lent, I gave a course of lectures in this Chapel, suggested by a proposal to readjust the Christian religion to the social and moral conditions of our day. Since that time I have been frequently requested to repeat them, and put them into permanent form by publication. In deference to the judgment of several of my reverend brethren, I have decided to do so, though not without hesitation, for the subject goes so deep, and branches out so widely, that it deserves a better and more thorough handling than I have given it ; and indeed, for the treatment of such themes, there is great need of a class of men who have the time for preparation which is not at the command of the overworked rectors of large city parishes. How should such a person begin, except with apologies for beginning at all ?

But the question is a burning one ; and one which may be answered in many ways ; and one which

they ought to answer who believe in the old gospel, the creed, and the traditional institutions of Christianity, lest a verdict in the case go by default before judges who believe in not one of those things. Let me begin by stating what was proposed at the date to which I referred, and is still, no doubt, in the minds of many good men. We know that there is a class in the community who consider Christianity to be the cause of most of the evils which afflict the human race, and propose, if they can, to exterminate it. Such is, I think, the position of the organization which calls itself the "Association of Free Thinkers." Now there are men among us whose conviction seems to be, that the only mode of successfully resisting that radical assault is, to look at Christianity all over, on the theory that there is something out of joint in it; to subject it to certain scientific and rationalistic tests; to shape and prune it according to the advice of representatives of popular thought, and thus somehow or other to square it with the views and demands of the nineteenth century. Their impression seems to be that the social philosophers, the psychologists, the scientific persons, and the free thinkers of our time must be right, to some extent, and Christianity, to the same extent, in the wrong; and that the only way to save Christianity is to revise it and readjust it, and that, if this be not speedily done, Christianity will go by the board. This seems to be the motive which inspires the notable design of a readjustment

of the Gospel to the social and moral conditions of the age. The same idea is probably at the bottom of other suggestions, as, for example, that old truths must take new forms; that we must drop certain terms as obsolete, without, however, giving up what they express; and that we must select or coin some new words for the ancient dogmas, in hope of making them less repulsive by giving them, as it were, a coat of sugar or gelatine. Uncasiness and impatience evidently possess the soul of these proponents, and a restlessness which argues decline of faith, with a horrible dread of being left without any faith at all. And the remedy for the trouble is to modify the Faith to any extent that may be necessary in order to prevent the adversary from objecting to it. That point will be reached only when the Faith has been reduced to such a minimum that the rationalist will not think it worth his while to take any further notice of it.

This, therefore, is the question before us: "*The Readjustment of Christianity to the Social and Moral Conditions of the Time.*" The phrase has that ring which catches the popular ear, the true smack of the philosophical schools; for what is there which the thinkers of this day are not able to tackle, and reconstruct, if need be? Here are that bigness, vagueness, and suggestiveness so delightful to the intellectual and cultured class, the devotees of "a Christ that is to be." Nobody can tell what is meant or what shall be forthcoming; but doubtless we are

to have something grand and ponderous out of this readjustment. The phrase reeks of the cultured religious cant of our age ; it suggests that way of meddling with everything in heaven and earth which is becoming a world-wide habit. And yet, let us admit at the outset that this idea of readjustment has a good sense as well as a bad. There are readjustments which are not mere tinkering nor profane mutilations ; revivals and repairs which ought not to be confused with modern inventions and alleged improvements. Nay, such readjustments do occur, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost. Reflect what changes have come over the world since Tiberius was Emperor in old Rome ! The world has changed its face ; it seems no longer the same world. The Church has adjusted herself to these variations with wisdom and skill. Changes are still in progress ; no man can say what is coming next. Perhaps readjustment may be desirable. Let us admit that it is. We may do so without sacrifice of principle, because part of the rebellion against so-called Christian doctrine is a revolt, not from Christian doctrine, but from inventions of men which have usurped its place ; and there are quarters in which readjustment, by way of purification, is the crying need of the hour.

Take, for example, the popular outcry against the teaching of the Church on the subject of the eternal punishment of the wicked. Against what do men thus protest ? Not against Catholic Eschatology :

they do not even know what that is. But theirs is a protest against a narrow scheme which has supplanted a wider doctrine ; a scheme which presents to the imagination a heaven and a hell, but no intermediate state ; extremes, with nothing to connect them. That fatal blunder, of cancelling the " Place of Departed Spirits," connected with this our world by links of love, and prayer, and oblations, and presences unseen but felt, the Place where the Dead in Christ are gradually perfected for their " final consummation both in body and soul ;" that strange notion, that the majority are to be turned at once and forever into torment, while the minority, by an arbitrary decree, and without regard to merits or demerits, are to be assigned, with equal celerity, to seats in heaven ; this rude disturbance of the equilibrium maintained in the older Christian teaching is what men abjure. But that is not truth ; it is a late invention ; it is something diverse from and inconsistent with the broad teaching respecting Heaven, Hades, and Gehenna which constitutes the Catholic exposition of the post-mortem destiny of men.

Again, it is a fact that the worship of Almighty God is shamefully neglected. But why not ? The office of the preacher has been magnified at the expense of that of the priest, until the people have forgotten that the priest's office exists. He who thinks that the chief end of going to church is to hear sermons will go to church just so long as the preacher

satisfies him. If he grow wiser than the preacher, or if he and the preacher fall out in their views, why should he any longer go to church? The sermon was the object; and the sermon edifies no more. Had it been firmly held that the first motive in assembling ourselves together is to worship Almighty God, and had a stately and splendid ritual continued to maintain that idea, the religious world might have presented a different look to-day; nor would men have forgotten that to stand at the altar and offer the Memorial before the Eternal Father is a nobler function than to preach.

There is need of readjustment: we frankly admit it. But where? And on what lines? With that as a pretext, one might sweep away very sacred and precious things, and replace them with modern and unauthorized inventions. That is not what we want: it would be disloyalty, spoliation, dishonesty. There are standards and molds of religion; archetypes, rules, ever-during patterns in teaching and practice, in faith and worship. For these they must search who have lost them. The thing to be done is not to build a new house. God forbid! It is to repair the old, to reconstruct what passion and folly once pulled down; to realize what the prophet foretold: "*And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.*"

Since, then, the problem is, how to put faith into

the hearts and religion into the lives of the unhappy people around us, without disloyalty to the principles of Christianity, it is clear that we must first agree what those principles are. You wish to reconstruct Christianity : what is that which you would reconstruct ?

To speak of Christianity is to use a precise term. Christianity is that religion in which Jesus Christ is centre, substance, and sum ; of which He is Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last. The Religion is not ours, it is His ; He must be heard ; and whosoever comes forward to touch, to adjust, to meddle in any way with this, must first have the modesty to observe that it belongs not, in anywise, to us men. Incessant and scrupulously exact reference to the Founder is the first duty ; nor has any man a right to leave out, to modify, to alter, when dealing with things that Christ did, or words that He spake. If you wish to keep Christianity, you must keep Christ. What, then, did He say ? For not one word of His may be altered, dropped out, or explained away, if your readjuster is an honest man.

First, then, Christ reaffirmed an older system which He said that He came to fulfil. It is what we call Natural Religion : it has these leading points as its substance and sum :

The consciousness of the truth and certainty of our own existence, as thinking and intelligent beings, and living souls :

The consciousness of the fact that there must have been an intelligent cause of the world, a Supreme Being, the author and giver of life to these works by which we are surrounded :

The conclusion that it is man's duty to fear, love, and worship the Great First Cause ; to love Him for His goodness, fear Him for the awe which many of His acts inspire, and worship Him for the power and majesty which invest Him.

Those are the elements of natural religion : I exist, conscious, intelligent, rational ; God exists, for I cannot reason out what is before me, nor explain myself, except by believing that He is ; and therefore I ought to love, fear, and worship God.

Christ took these simple truths, these elements, to begin with. He said : " I come to fulfil them, to clear up doubt concerning them, to add to, expand, and develop them." And He began with this astounding statement ; that He was, Himself, that very God whom man by the light of nature dimly sees.

There is no escape from that tremendous claim : it begins all, it includes all, it ends all ; it IS Christianity. Christianity, as a system, is the application of the truth that Jesus Christ is " God over all, blessed for evermore." By the dim light of nature, through a haze not over-clear, men saw that God must be. But their ideas about God were confused ; they multiplied the One God into " gods many and lords many ;"¹ they made use of signs and

¹ 1 Cor. viii. 5.

symbols, and ended in confounding the sign with Him whom it signified; they thought that "the Godhead was like unto gold or silver or stone, graven by art and man's device;"¹ they "changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things,"² till all became obscure. And then the wiser and more cultured, leaving those follies, sought to find out God by rational methods, psychological process, and philosophic study: and that failed, and by their scepticism they increased the darkness. Dimly men perceived that they were immortal; yet even of this they were not sure; it was rather a hope than a faith. And so the world drifted on, encumbered with false religions, vain sacrifices, and the paraphernalia of elaborate worship of innumerable deities, at which the scholars and sophists scoffed, while morals and manners reflected the wretched state of the minds of men; and so it went, till a time arrived in the counsels of the Most High. Then appeared on the earth One born of a woman, and having the form of a man, and He said: "I am the Lord your God. I am that truth which men are seeking. I am that Way wherein the law written on men's hearts tells them that they must walk if they would find rest. I am that Life which cannot die. Do My will; you shall fulfil the moral law; worship Me; so shall you render acceptable service to the Most

¹ Acts xvii. 29.² Romans i. 23.

High ; fear Me ; that is holy fear ; love Me ; and you love the Eternal good. It is I who can lift you out of the shadow of death. It is I who bring life and immortality to light through My gospel. I am the Resurrection and the Life : he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live : and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die."

This is, in substance, what Jesus Christ said. There is no evading the conclusion that He is Christianity, and that Christianity is He. We must bear this in mind when the talk is of readjustment. If Christianity be Christ, it may not be Christ who needs readjustment, but ourselves.

Now there are those in this age who object to nothing so much as to dogma. They say that Christ must be preached, indeed, but not as a dogma or a doctrine ; that the Christianity which the world needs must be neither doctrinal nor dogmatic. I do not know what they mean ; the language sounds unintelligible.¹ No man can logically retain rever-

¹ "Religion, to support itself, must rest consciously on its Object : the intellectual apprehension of that Object as true is an integral element of religion. In other words, religion is practically inseparable from theology. The religious Mahomedan sees in Allah a being to whose absolute decrees he must implicitly resign himself ; a theological dogma, then, is the basis of the specific Mahomedan form of religion. A child reads in the Sermon on the Mount that our Heavenly Father takes care of the sparrows, and of the lilies of the field, and the child prays to Him accordingly. The truth

ence or respect for Jesus Christ who does not believe that Jesus Christ was what He declared Himself to be ; and no one can state, intelligibly, what Jesus Christ is, as He described Himself, without the use of dogmatic terms. To tell who and what Christ is without the terms of dogmatic theology is as impossible as to describe a machine without using the terminology of mechanics. Christ is an objective fact ; not a sentiment, nor an airy ideal, nor an evanescent vibration in the thought. To state what the fact is, one must speak in language applicable to facts. What do they mean who harp thus incessantly on the need of getting free from dogma ? Are they afraid to ask, or to be asked, the question which the Lord put to Peter, "Whom do men say that the Son of Man is ?" We have a right to ask it ; we must ask it ; and we must have a plain, sharp, clean-cut reply. Who is He ? What is He ? Do you shrink from such queries ? You cannot mean, surely, that it makes no difference who or what He is, the founder of that religion in which you say you be-

upon which the child rests is the dogma of the Divine Providence, which encourages trust, and warrants prayer, and lies at the root of the child's religion. In short, religion cannot exist without some view of its Object, namely, God ; but no sooner do you introduce any intellectual aspect whatever of God, nay, the bare idea that such a Being exists, than you have before you not merely a religion, but at least, in some sense, a theology" (Bampton Lecture on The Divinity of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, H. P. Liddon, D.D., p. 6. Rivingtons, 1867).

lieve. If it is a matter of consequence, then must we have a plain reply ; that reply is, and must be, dogmatic ; no other reply would be intelligible. It is given, fearlessly and clearly, in the Catholic Creed : " God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God ; Being of One Substance with the Father ; yea, moreover, He by whom all things were made and by whom all things consist." That is dogma ; that is the Christian Faith ; and perhaps the secret of the dread of dogma lies in a disbelief of that paramount fact. Men dread to make St. Peter's confession ; they dread still more to face the consequences if they deny it. Let us see what the consequences, logically, must be.

Christ claimed to be the Very God, the Great I AM. He wrought miracles in proof of it. His apostles believed on Him. The Church was founded on the Rock of that truth. From that day to this has He been worshipped as God. There is no difference on that point among Greeks, Latins, Anglicans ; east and west, north and south, Catholic and Protestant, and Christians of innumerable names, worship Christ as God. Suppose He were not God and that the miracles were not true ; where should we be left ? Nothing can be plainer than this : that belief in Christ as God has come from simply taking what He said of Himself to be true. Suppose it was not true, after all, and that no real miracle was ever wrought to prove it. What reverence, what veneration, could be left for the character of

Jesus Christ? If not the Mighty God, the Miracle-Worker, He was not even a wise or a truthful man; nor could we retain respect for His intelligence and moral character, unless at the expense of our own consistency. For let us reflect; walking, indeed, in deep waters, yet speaking calmly and reverently. Either Jesus Christ was, or He was not, God. Suppose that He was not; and then read the terms in which He spoke of Himself, the claim He made, the superhuman powers which He pretended to exercise. Measured by His own moral standard, judged by His own rule, He loses the character of a model to men, and becomes, on the other hand, a specimen of a conceit, a pride, and an arrogance which are all but incredible. We are taught, in good books, that humility and modesty are chief among virtues, that he is a fool who overrates himself, that true merit is never boastful. Yet here is One who went up and down, preaching Himself as the Way, the Truth, the Life; who said that He was One with the Eternal and Almighty God; who assumed that Deity's incommunicable Name; who announced Himself as the Resurrection and the Life, in whom all the dead shall rise again; who declared that His Flesh was the food of immortality; who claimed power to forgive sin; who acted as King in Heaven and Earth; who associated Himself historically with the origin of the world and with the scenes that are to attend its close; who taught and trained a band of followers to keep up this idea after He was gone, bidding



them preach Him to all nations, as the God by whom all things were created, in whom all consist, who must be worshipped with Divine honors, and without faith in whom there can be no salvation. Was He, then, not God? If not, what then? Surely a warning, not an example; the reverse of what is honest, good, and worthy of imitation; this, unless you excuse the error by supposing Him to have been a half-crazed enthusiast, filled with the wildest visions that ever possessed a human mind, and pardonable only because He knew not what He said. Or let us ask of those miracles of His: Were they real, or unreal? If unreal, what will you say of Him? Either He knew, or He did not know, their character. Did He *not* know that they were semblances and lying wonders? Then was He Himself imposed upon, and therefore ignorant. Did He know that they were false? Then was He a wilful deceiver. That is your choice, who deny the Godhead of Christ and the truth of His great acts. He was a dupe, or a deceiver. If a dupe, He was not wise; if a deceiver, He was not good. And yet we still find men among us who deny the faith of the Church concerning Christ, yet flatter themselves that they can still reverence and respect Him as a sage, a saint, a pure moralist, the flower and pattern of our race. Is that the direction which the readjustment of Christianity is to take? Is it to move toward a weakening of the dogmatic, a depressing of the miraculous, a depreciating of the supernatural? Such readjustment is

another name for destruction. The Godhead, the divinity, the supernatural, the sacramental, are inextricably blended with everything that Jesus did, and said, and was. Try to separate them, and what you will have left, that key having been taken away, will be execrable, not admirable—a residuum of arrogance, ignorance, vamping, deceit, and folly, which deserved the shameful doom of a Roman execution. If Jesus Christ, our blessed and glorious Lord and Saviour, be not God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, then surely the Hebrew that bore that name was but a compound of an uneducated dupe and an artful impostor, and the religion which is called after Him deserves no readjustment other than to be completely swept out of a world which it has deluded. And I sympathize more with the man who honestly comes out and regards Him as an impostor, and the greatest this world ever saw, than with the other, no stranger to us, who denies the Catholic Faith regarding Jesus Christ, puts his gloss on the sacred text, eliminates the marrow and kernel of the revelation, disparages dogma, loses himself in mist and shadows without substance, makes of Christ a mere impersonal sentiment and influence, and yet goes on calling himself a Christian and demanding a readjustment of a religion in which, actually, he has ceased to believe.¹

¹ “Of a truth, the alternative before us is terrible; but can devout and earnest thought falter for a moment in the agony of its suspense? Surely it cannot. The moral character of

I know, dear brethren, that these are awful subjects to deal with ; but it is best to look things in the face, and see to what certain tendencies lead. I have referred to the restlessness of some Christian people under dogmatic teaching. They want nothing stated in positive and simple terms ; all must be loose, vague, and, to plain men, unintelligible. But the Christian Religion could not exist without its dogma. "Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am ?" So Christ challenged His hearers ; so does He, through the Church, now challenge the world ; so does He challenge the intellect of our own day. It is a plain question ; there must be a plain answer. Who and what and where is Christ ? Let

Christ, viewed in connection with the preternatural facts of His Human Life, will bear the strain which the argument puts upon it. It is easier for a good man to believe that, in a world where he is encompassed by mysteries, where his own being itself is a consummate mystery, the Moral Author of the wonders around him should, for great moral purposes, have taken to Himself a Created Form, than that the One Human Life which realizes the idea of humanity, the One Man Who is at once perfect strength and perfect tenderness, the One Pattern of our race in Whom its virtues are combined and from Whom its vices are eliminated, should have been guilty, when speaking about Himself, of an arrogance, of a self-seeking, and of an insincerity which, if admitted, must justly degrade Him far below the moral level of millions among His unhonored worshippers. It is easier, in short, to believe that God has consummated His works of wonder and of mercy by a crowning Self-Revelation in which mercy and beauty reach their climax, than to close the moral

that go unanswered, and the Religion loses its text, its creed, its theme. Answer it, and you have a dogma, a doctrine, something that children may learn by heart, and full-grown men may study to their profit. We who sail the stormy seas of this world need our chart and our compass, as much as do the mariners on the Western Ocean. The lines on the chart must be fixed and immovable, the needle must point one way. What would you do with a chart, all a blur, wherein lines moved and shifted, as each man looked at it? With a compass, wherein the needle spun around, in continual oscillation? If it be so, that men are loose in views, misty in faith, inaccurate in expression, doubtful about Christ, Who, What, Where He is, then I submit, that while such

eye to the brightest spot that meets it in Human History, and—since a bare Theism reproduces the main difficulties of Christianity without any of its compensations—to see at last in man's inexplicable destiny only the justification of his despair. Yet the true alternative to this frightful conclusion is in reality a frank acceptance of the doctrine which is under consideration in these lectures. For Christianity, both as a creed and as a life, depends absolutely upon the Personal Character of its Founder. Unless His virtue was only apparent, unless His miracles were nothing better than a popular delusion, we must admit that His Self-Assertion is justified, even in the full measure of its blessed and awful import. We must deny the antagonism which is said to exist between the doctrine of Christ's Divinity and the History of His human manifestation. We must believe and confess that the Christ of history is the Christ of the Catholic Creed" (Dr. Liddon's Bampton Lecture, pp. 307-8).



confusion shows the need of some readjustment of their religion, the readjustment must take a positive form, and that what society needs, in the way of plain dogmatic teaching, is not less of it, but more.

I beg you, dear brethren, weigh these things well. We speak of the Religion of Jesus Christ. Observe, that there is a confusion in the very term. The expression is not merely descriptive, it is also possessive; this men forget. It does not follow that any religion in a which place should be accorded to Jesus Christ would have a right to be called His Religion. "God is not the author of confusion." I can imagine a system called by His name, adorned by His symbols, conceding to Him the most conspicuous position in it, and yet not His Religion at all. By Christ's Religion, properly, is not to be understood any religion in which He is acknowledged and kept prominent; but that particular system which He established nineteen hundred years ago, and which is His own peculiar possession. This religion no man has a right to modify, change, adapt, adjust; whoso touches it touches what is not his. Yet men have gone crazy on that point, as about many other things. They have acted as if they deemed Christ's Religion to be free booty, which they were competent to seize on, prune, hack at, enlarge, diminish at will; something for each one to shape and fit to his own mind; and that all must be well, so long as they keep the name of Jesus, and continue to describe their works as His. Such lib-

erties, and they are those which every sect has taken, are intolerable. Let us recall another and a similar abuse of individual right. A hymn is the property of the poet. He may, or may not, take out a copyright ; but whether he do so or not, the composition belongs to the composer, and no one has a right to alter it without his consent. Yet think of the business of hymn-tinkering, how shamelessly it has been pursued ! Look at our own Hymnal ; you will find very many hymns which have been altered, amended, improved, according to the private notions of Committees of General Conventions ; as though the author had no property or right in his own, and everybody was free to change them at will. And then we hear it said, " Such a hymn is of Wesley, that one by Toplady, and this by Montgomery." It is not true : the work is Wesley's, touched up by some modern poetaster ; Toplady's, altered by one knows not what bold hand. Now the same thing is done, habitually, in religion. Not a student, critic, philosopher, or would-be-reformer but must have a hand in the work of revising, correcting, adapting, readjusting the Religion of Jesus Christ, under the impression that all have the right to take it up after that independent fashion, and make it what they think it ought to be. Such action in religion is as immoral, as inexcusable, as in literature. The copyright will always be respected, by the honest, even though the author be dead and gone ; he has rights, though without power to assert them. If I revise a

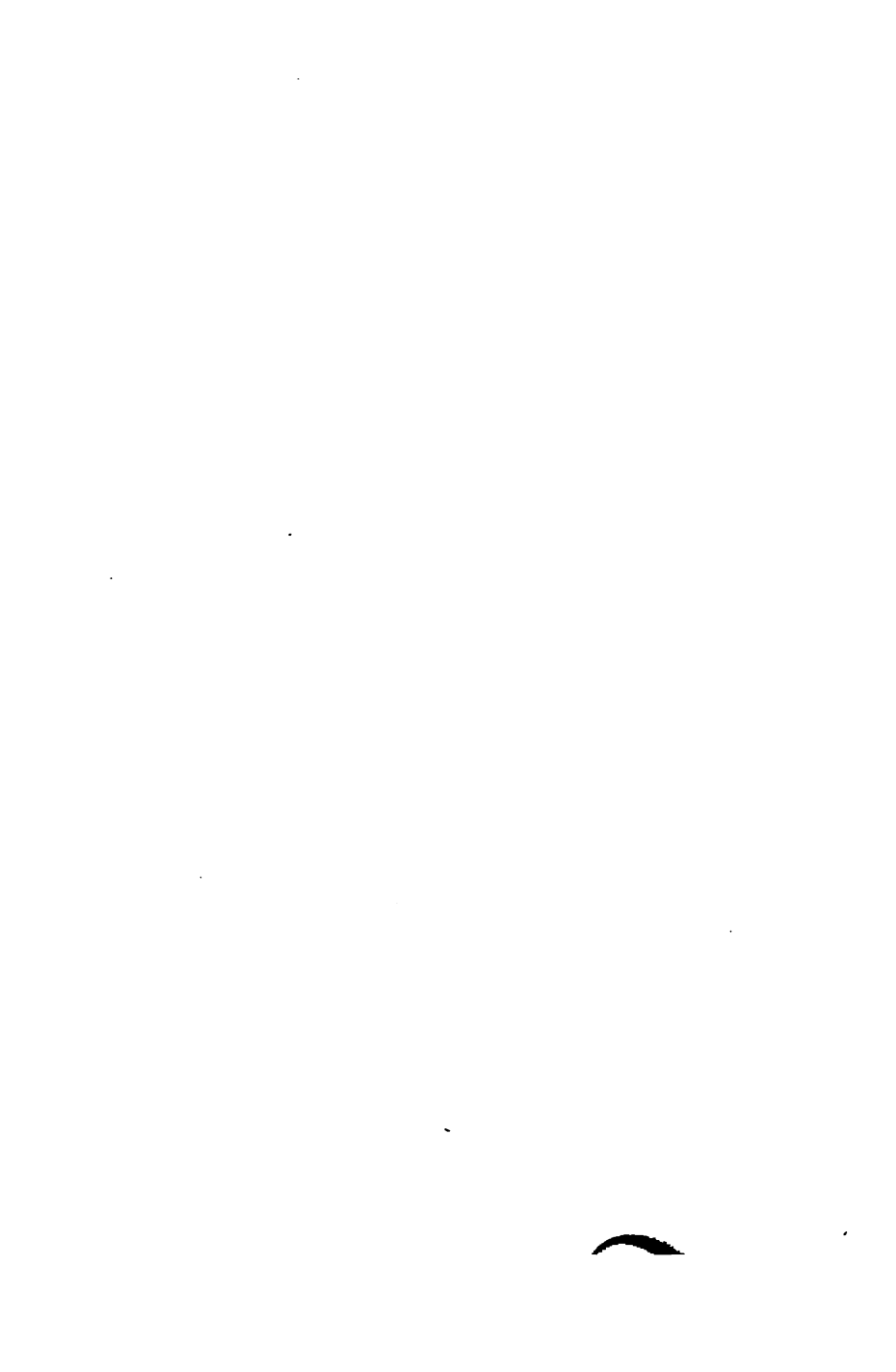


book, and change its sense, and greatly alter it, in important respects, be it so, provided I state on the title-page of this corrupt edition just what I have done with the original text ; but to put it forth, garbled and transformed, with no hint of the facts, and with the name of the author prefixed to it as before, is a crime, and one which loses not its character though centuries have passed away. Now, that is what we have to charge on the founders of schools in the Church ; against that we protest in advance, when the talk is about readjustment. Let it be remembered that there is an authorship there, a copyright ; that the Founder of that religion lives ; that the religion is His ; that it ought to have been kept precisely as it came to us from Him, and from them who were from the beginning eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word. What the world has seen too much of is revised and improved editions ; the Christian Religion, not in its Catholic and Apostolic purity, but as edited by Pope and Puritan, amended by Luther, corrected by Calvin, diluted by Socinus, and now furnished in divers editions to suit peculiar tastes ; in the Roman Edition, the Anglican Edition, the Baptist and Methodist and Presbyterian Editions, in the High, Broad, Low, Tractarian, Evangelical styles. The sin in all this is the same ; men have laid their hands on something which did not belong to them ; they have made free with the property of another ; the original becomes more and more illegible ; the old name re-

mains, but it tells what is not true. And probably the idea of the latest school is, to do what they did with the old parchments, rub off everything, and write an entirely new work on the desecrated leaves. The noble vellum on which were delivered to us the lively oracles of God is to be used as a Palimpsest of some modern thing having naught of Christianity save the name.

I stop here for the evening. I give you, as the theme of the first of these instructions, two plain statements, connected with the proposed readjustment of Christianity to the social and moral conditions of our time. First, Christianity is Christ's, not ours. Secondly, it comes to us in an intensely dogmatic form. It begins with the announcement of a fact which confounds the imagination and transcends the reason. He who does not accept that fact, does not accept, and has not got, Christianity, in the exact and full sense of the word. He who does accept that fact, should expect the sequel to correspond to the prelude ; he should expect to find other mysteries, other matters too high for him, in a system whose Head is the Incarnate God.





**The Darkness of the Old World, and
God's Way of Enlightening It.**



LECTURE II.

THE DARKNESS OF THE OLD WORLD, AND GOD'S WAY OF ENLIGHTENING IT.

“ And we know that we are of God ; and the whole world lieth in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true.”—1 S. JOHN v. 19, 20.

I RESUME my theme this evening at the point where we broke off a week ago. You recall what has been said. In Christianity, as in other systems, readjustment is sometimes needed, and has, at intervals, been made. But since the Christian Religion is not the invention of man, but the ordinance of God, to readjust it is a dangerous work. It has not changed ; it came to us complete in essentials ; it has been damaged and defaced by men ; but, in itself, the Religion is the same. What needs to be done from time to time is to clear it of earthly sediment and accretions. The world was in evil case when Christ came into it. He took it in hand ; He applied such remedies as He knew to be best. If the moral and intellectual conditions which then existed be reproduced, should not the remedies be the same ? It may appear, on investigation, that it



is a backsliding society which needs readjustment, and not that holy religion which it has rejected, oblivious of the lessons of the past.

The word which I have used so frequently conveys a clear idea : it implies that something is going wrong and must be set right again. Mathematical instruments need adjustment from time to time, and astronomical instruments, and sextants, and watches, and anything that has fine and complicated machinery : it is necessary to adjust, whenever things fall out of gear. But where in God's created universe is there a work more wonderful than Man ? What machine so curious and complicated as his body, what so subtle and mysterious as his soul ? What must the Religion be through which this marvellous being is linked to his Divine Creator, which has its correspondences in his entire life, which lifts him up and governs him forever ? Must not that also be a delicate, a wonderful, thing ? Were it strange, considering the agency and the subject, if disturbance should sometimes occur ? In that event, what will be the wise man's course ? Surely, to study the original adjustment. And the lines of that study are two ; they lead us to these two questions : What was Man, as God made him ? and What was his intellectual and moral condition, when God came here to seek and to save His lost ?

I ask these two questions, and I call on you to ponder the answer.

What is Man ? How did Christ's Religion meet

him ? How did it work along the lines of his character ? How did it touch him in his daily life ? That is our first inquiry. You have before you this problem, to revive the power of a system which regenerated the old world. Remember : man, so far as that system has to do with him, remains the same. He is, to-day, essentially, what he was when Christ appeared in Syria : there are the same elements, the same functions, the same wants, in this our nature ; nor can a new system be needed, where, in the meantime, no essential change has occurred. What, then, are the leading characteristics of Human Nature ? I do not ask, what were they, but, what *are* they : for men, take them where and when you choose, are substantially the same, from one generation to another.

It has been well said, that "in Human Nature, it is the balance, harmony, and coequal development of Sense, Intellect, and Spirit which constitutes perfection."¹ "Body, Soul, and Spirit," saith the Apostle, summing up what we are.² And in man, we find, over and above the physical senses, three more : the intellectual sense, the moral sense, and the æsthetic sense. Man has an intelligent sense of the true, a moral sense of the good, an æsthetic sense of the beautiful. His are the reason, the affections, and the imagination ; he sympathizes, he thinks, he loves. Each element in him desires its

¹ Lord Lindsay : *Christian Art*, vol. ii., p. 163.

² 1 Thess. v. 23.

own, and abhors what is alien : thought and reason cannot endure the irrational, the impossible, the absurd ; the heart, if pure, abhors the evil and the corrupt ; the cultured taste revolts at the squalid, the sordid, and the ugly. And true progress depends on the just and even development of the entire nature : cultivate one part, neglecting the rest, and the product is a monster. Stunt the intellectual powers, and you have a fool ; dwarf the moral powers, and you have a devil ; starve the affections, and the life is hard, cynical, and cold ; kill the imagination, and all things become stiff, dry, and gloomy. Develop, evenly and faithfully, the full manhood, and you find your reward in the sweetness and strength of a thoughtful, pure, and beautiful life.

But how shall this complex nature be developed ? Progress must be toward some anticipated end ; advance is made by the help of lights and marks along the way and far in front. You come at once to the questions, not to be evaded, Whither are we going, and for what do we exist ? Is this world all ? or is there another ? Is the life of man complete in three score years and ten, or is there more of it to come ? Is this natural order the only one with which we have to do, or is there also a supernatural order ? Your answer to these questions is decisive of your fate. For if this world be all, and we have no other life, then the goal of human development and its limits must be sought somewhere this side of the barrier of death. But if not ; if there be also

a supernatural order, with which our relations are direct ; if man has an immortal soul ; if God " hath given him length of days forever and ever,"¹ then the outlook for us is away beyond the black furrow of the grave. Development stops not here ; it goes on, through things temporal into things eternal ; and the final objects of life, the ideals, the motive powers, must be in that radiant front. The intellect seeks an absolute truth, where alone it should be sought, in God. The moral nature cries out for a perfect righteousness. The æsthetic nature discerns the outlines of an ideal loveliness feebly realized in nature. Development, in any creature capable of it, is the working toward the highest point which, by the constitution of that creature, it is able to reach. If man be not body only, but body, soul, and spirit, made "in the Image of God,"² the limits of development for him can only be attained in perfect union with that God "who is a spirit,"³ and in that state where they "never die."⁴ For us, the "Reason Why" is in the life beyond the tomb ; the beacons are on the coast of the eternal land. And now, that there may be growth, healthful and steady, intellectual, moral, and æsthetic advance, three things must be made known to us : an absolute truth, a faultless righteousness, and a perfect beauty. The intellect demands the knowledge of a Truth, in which to rest, and by which to measure all lower

¹ Psalm xxi. 4.

² S. John iv. 24.

³ Genesis i. 27.

⁴ S. John xi. 26.



and minor truths; the affections demand union with a Love which may fill the heart and hallow all lesser loves; the imagination seeks the sight of a supreme ideal beauty, which shall throw its bright beams on this inferior state,

“ Leaving that beautiful which still was so,
And making that which is not, till the place
Becomes religion, ... ”

and killing the taste for what is vulgar, foul, and impure. Nor can it ever be well with men, unless they know the truth, and love righteousness, and see that nothing is beautiful which is not also holy and pure.

I have answered the first question—What is Man as God the Creator meant Him to be? I come to the second—What was Man as God the Redeemer found him when He came to seek and to save His lost?

Briefly, the earth was a scene of intellectual, moral, and religious chaos. Truth, righteousness, beauty; what had become of them? Men were certain of nothing; convictions were lost; opinion and surmise alone remained; they saw, distinctly, nothing beyond the range of sense and the line of this present life. The intellect, lost in speculation, could not find a truth in which to rest. The conscience was but “a foolish heart darkened.”¹ The ideal of beauty was found in the brawn and thews

¹ Romans i. 21.

of an athlete or the lissome graces of a naked courtesan. It is an old story, that of the degradation of mankind, in the age which closed in that blessed night when the Angels came out above the plains of Bethlehem and sung their Christmas carol of grace, mercy, and peace; yes, it is an old and a horrible story. What was religion? A worship of devils, not of God; a vast network of polytheism; the deification of vices, the canonization of animal lust and unregulated passion. Think of that pagan Curia, in which the gods and goddesses were thieves, robbers, adulterers, and adulteresses; their abandoned lives the reflex of the sins of the lower world; their hearts full of intrigue, envy, malice; hateful, and hating one another. There are Juno, the jealous wife, and Venus, the voluptuous; Vulcan, the deformed blacksmith, and Mars, the model of a dare-devil soldier of fortune; and one knows not what troop of dissipated, depraved, disgusting wretches, called by God's name, and worshipped at their several shrines; so bad in general that to be chaste and pure was, in that horde, a marked distinction. What wonder if the most characteristic of the pagan rites were hidden from the public eye? And such being the religion, what were the morals of that age, and what its social condition? They were what such a religion might be expected to produce; what St. Paul describes, in his epistles, what the Christian Fathers have painted, with hands which cautiously drew aside the veil and scarce dared to trace the

scene thus disclosed. It is the reign of the strong over the weak ; oppression and violence are in their borders ; lust, outdoing itself, passes the barrier of nature, and takes monstrous shapes. Man, degraded and brutalized, a law unto himself, exercises a wide and general tyranny ; what we call women, are slaves ; what we call slaves, are chattels and not human beings ; even the child is sold by its own parent. And whence comes this total overthrow of religious and moral restraints ? We trace it to one cause : the trouble begins in the mind and spirit ; it travels thence through the members ; it blights the household ; it poisons the whole state. If Man be not intellect, he is nothing ; the intellect is his God-given instrument to keep him straight, true to God, true to himself. Do you ask what the mind was at in those days ? Chaos is everywhere, indeed ; yet nowhere more hopeless than in the thoughts of men. All are at sea ; there is no creed ; no unity in belief ; no real belief at all. There are philosophies, theories, guess-work ; inquirers, single and in groups ; and, everywhere, negation. One man says that there is no God at all ; another decides that there are many ; a third declares his conviction that matter is all, and that there is neither angel nor spirit ; there are a dozen explanations of the origin of things ; speculation runs wild on every topic that curiosity suggests. As for the soul, no settled belief in its immortality ; no convincing argument ; a probability, at best, confessed by some few minds.

Is not this mad confusion of thought the source of confusion elsewhere? If every function is disorganized, is it not because the Reason no longer acts its part? To discover the source of the abominations of paganism in its social, moral, and religious aspects, walk by the side of the troubled river up to its fountain. Intellectual error is the well-head of the trouble; the finite mind, no longer guided by the Infinite Mind, is independent and free; it sees, if anything, mere phantoms of its own creation; it works eccentrically, or madly, like an engine over which one has lost control; nor is there any department of society in which the shock is not felt.

Such was the state of affairs when God drew near, to help and save; moral and intellectual chaos. Its cause, the absence of certainty on points on which man must have light; the want of an authority to enforce obedience, and a grace to enable to obey. Its effect, that dismal scene on which a pure mind can hardly dwell without danger of contamination. To this are they come "who did not like to retain God in their thoughts; here be darkness as the shadow of death, and dimness of anguish, and a moral stench like that of a pest-house,

" . . . l'occhio intorno invio,
E veggio ad ogni man grande compagna
Piena di duolo e di tormento rio.'"¹

And next I ask you to observe a memorable thing. Here was a problem: to set the world right, to

¹ Inferno, canto ix., 109-111.

bring life and light to men, to give the mind a truth on which to feed, the heart a love in which to rest, the soul a perfect beauty to compensate for the misery of evil and sin. Now, if ever, shall we learn the best means to that end ; and what was true of one time is true of all. God had that problem to solve. What did God do ? What remedy did He apply ? Did He proceed by setting afloat in the world a fresh instalment of opinions ? Did He try to cure the widespread evil by furnishing a fresh supply of material for the wrangling schools ? Was it a fine philosophical statement, or a rare theory, or a higher range of speculation that they needed, those men who were sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death ? The Saviour of the human race—granting that there was such a personage, and it has been believed, these two thousand years, almost, that there was—the Saviour of mankind, how did He come ? Did He come as a Doctor or Professor, to found another and very superior Academy, where men should go on arguing about lofty themes ; in which free inquiry should be promoted, and experimental science stimulated ; from which, as from a prolific mother, hundreds of schools should grow and multiply from age to age, each expressive of the passing thoughts and changing views of men ? Fear not, tremble not, lest an expedient so vain, an essay so important, should be the lame result of the Act of Redemption. A man would have taken that method ; it is precisely what would have been

deemed the proper thing by one of our restless and inquisitive speculators, our supercilious and self-sufficient students and essayists. That is what a man would have done; it was not what God did. God's thoughts are not our thoughts; His ways are not our ways. To a world crazed with speculation, drunken with its own imaginations, God gave what it needed most. "The truth," said He, "shall set you free; and I am the truth." Into that lunatic asylum, where men, wearing the hollow masks of dreamland, walked about exchanging their fancies, private judgments, and philosophic speculations, God sent a Fact, an objective Reality; something independent of human thought, not made by it, nor in it, nor of it; not evolved out of it, not to be affected, modified, adjusted by it. That Fact was not a proposition, nor a phrase, nor a figure of speech, nor a poetical sentiment; it was not something which men could read backward or forward, make or unmake, lessen or expand. But that Fact, briefly, was God Himself; God, Who is in substance distinct from all created things; God, Whose existence is objective, and not an outcome of human thought; the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last—that God in Whom is "no variableness, neither shadow of turning."¹ That God was born of the Virgin, "made of a woman, made under the Law;"² He Who is before all things, became, in time, a Fact in history; He appeared among us, "in

¹ S. James i. 17.

² Gal. iv. 4.



substance of our flesh ;”¹ He came to men as their Brother, calling them to Himself as “ the Way, the Truth, the Life.”² Here is a Fact that cannot be changed ; that admits neither of adjustment nor re-adjustment ; that needs no new terms in which to state it, because it remains perpetually the same. They testified of Him as One Whom they had heard, Whom they had seen, Whom their hands had handled.³ The terms in which He is described in the Scriptures, in the Creed, and in the liturgical and devotional offices of the Church can never need amending or correcting. New-fangled phrases could but obscure “ the truth as it is in Jesus Christ.” There is no more need of new terms in which to state that old truth than of new names for the head, the hands, the heart, in your own material frame.

I say it earnestly and solemnly, that this is above all others the thing most necessary for us to know, and knowing, to hold fast. God’s remedy for the wild misery of a world lost in error, and going deeper into darkness, was the distinct revelation to it of what we call objective truth ; of a truth which IS, apart from those to whom it is shown ; which exists outside of the mind that seeks it and the heart that loves it ; which stands unchanging while men pass away ; which is as little affected by their judgments concerning it as the great seaward cliff by the light spray or the lighter vapors that strike its front. To

¹ Collect for Feast of the Purification.

² S. John xiv. 6.

³ I John i. 1.

state that truth we must use dogmatic language; the dogma is not the truth itself, it is our way of telling what the truth is, that we may hold it intelligently ourselves and teach it to other men.¹ And to that objective truth, brought to our eyes, presented to our grasp, in some plain and practical way, without evasion, or *double-entendre*; to that truth, expressed in some clear, honest statement which the simple and the very children can apprehend, must man surrender; he must accept it, he must love it, he must live in it and by it; and so the truth shall

¹ We are all indebted to the Rev. Marvin R. Vincent, D.D., for some strong, manly, sensible words on the subject of Dogma, very much needed in these days of religious timourousness and imbecility. "Christ was a dogmatic teacher. I know that the word 'dogma' jars upon some ears, but it is a fair question whether the word or the ear is responsible for the jar. . . . Dogma is a good New Testament word, which always carries the sense of authority. The purest dogmatism is the basis of at least two-thirds of our knowledge." And again, "We cannot work for men's salvation with anything less than a certainty, held by us as it was held and propounded by Christ as a fixed and unalterable, eternal fact. Men cannot be moved to self-abandonment and self-consecration by an open question. If the Gospel is something yet to be proven, it is time that Christians, at least, abandoned it for something else. If the Gospel is still a thing in doubt, if there is a possibility that science may yet put us out in the cold, without a Saviour, and bankrupt in faith, and shivering in the blasts from every point of the philosophic compass, I, for one, want no more of it." ("Christ as a Teacher." A. D. F. Randolph & Co. New York.)

make him free ; ¹ free from the law of sin and death, free from the torture of doubt, free, above all, from himself, his blunders and vainglorious boasts ; that truth, in short, shall save him. And that is God in " Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and to-day and forever." ²

This is the meaning of the Incarnation in its relation to human thought. It brings us personally in contact with the supernatural world. It sets before us the eternal standards of Truth, Love, and Beauty. It restores to man the object which he seeks. It is the one firm thing, where all else is loose and unsteady, the one thing that we cannot touch save as we touch what we also adore. And the man who looks out of himself, and beholds that sublime fact, and thows himself with ardor into religious devotion to it, shall find his reward : the way is clear before him. God Incarnate is the goal of intellectual effort, the perfection of human development. In God Incarnate is the law of true holiness and righteousness ; in Him is perfect beauty ; and in the desire of union with Him is the motive which men need to break with the evil and ugliness around them and ascend to a higher plane. Mind, heart, imagination may drink of that eternal fountain and be satisfied ; " all our fresh springs are in Him ;" ³ there is the response to every question, the object on which to direct the energies without dread of failure ; there

¹ S. John viii. 32.

² Hebrews xiii. 8.

³ Psalm lxxxvii. 7.

are power and strength, glory and joy. Such is the prize within the reach of him who comprehends that his duty is to use his natural powers to grasp and appropriate what God shows him outside of himself. Faith in God, revealing Himself to man, is but motion away from ourselves and toward Him; to walk by faith is the fulfilment of our destiny and the crowning victory by which we overcome the world.¹

Before concluding, I wish to refer, briefly, to a point connected with my subject. The curse of man, from the beginning, has been his own opinion, followed in known variance with the command of God. Has, then, the private judgment nothing to do? Are we not to depend on it for anything? Far from us be the thought. The private judgment has a worthy and proper office: it is a verifying faculty. Let me try to make this clear. When Christ appeared on earth, there were things in Him which men had neither the right to discuss nor the power to settle. His Eternal Generation, the union of the Godhead and the Manhood in His Person, the mystery of His perfect wisdom, the way in which virtue was stored up in His Human Flesh, the *modus operandi* of the sacraments which He instituted: think as they might on these and like points, their thoughts amounted to nothing; they made, they unmade, nothing; and therefore thought was folly.

¹ "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John v. 4).

But men had a right to verify His miracles, to compare what He said of Himself with what was written in their sacred books ; to study the effect of His teaching ; to satisfy themselves that He did really die on the cross ; above all, to convince themselves of the fact that He did truly rise again from death. Such rights, as a verifying faculty, has the private judgment. But beyond that it may not safely go. It cannot discover supernatural truth ; it cannot demonstrate such truth ; of such truth it is not a competent judge. It can verify the evidence of the revelation of divine mysteries ; but the mysteries themselves are far above beyond its reach ; it cannot fathom, or modify, or adjust, or readjust what is simply presented to it for acceptance by the Holy Ghost.¹

We may properly inquire, Were the miracles actually wrought ? Did Christ claim to be God ? On the whole, has that claim been sustained by the results ? Did He truly rise from the dead ? Did He found a visible Church ? Are the Gospels genuine ? Is the history of that organization known as the Holy Catholic Church authentic ? Did Ignatius of Antioch accept Episcopacy ? Did Irenæus and Clement of Jerusalem hold the Real Presence ? Do the ancient liturgies contain the idea of a Sacrifice in the Eucharist ? Such questions are legitimate ; the

¹ For the development and application of this point the reader is referred to the University Sermon which constitutes the Appendix to this series of lectures.

judgment of man, aided by study, may reverently consider them. But if it leave that work and set up to dispute and argue about the Mystery itself; if it return to the old business of approving or disapproving the substance of the revelation, saying of this, It is incredible; and of that, It is immoral; and of something else, It agrees not with general experience, and is therefore false; or, It shocks me, and I will not hear it; or, It is foolish superstition, fit only for women and children: in that case the private judgment has simply run mad once more; it has resumed that wretched occupation which made the old world the dark place which it was; it contradicts itself; it commits suicide. And whenever you hear of readjustments of the Religion of Jesus Christ, if it implies that man is able to sit as judge on what God tells him, and that the Creed of the Catholic Church is to be subjected to tests invented by the finite intelligence, and to stand or fall by that rule, say at once, "We will have no part or lot in such proceedings. We know how God helped men of old; there is no better way to help us now; He helps us in that same way still. And whenever the human reason, assuming the double office of critic and judge, attempts to improve upon God's work, it does but renew the blunder of the past, and courts the confusion which must ensue."

Here let me conclude. Consider how simple was God's mode of redeeming the world; to introduce into the confusion, perplexity, and doubt which were

the outcome of unguided human thought a Saviour Who was truth, fact, and reality; Who "abideth ever," the same, whatever we may think about Him; in whom all questions find their answer, and all cares are stilled. To Him let us repair, when weary of dispute and debate; to Him let us bear our testimony as honest men. "LORD, TO WHOM SHALL WE GO BUT TO THEE? THOU HAST THE WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE."

**Christianity a Dogmatic, Sacerdotal,
and Sacramental System.**



LECTURE III.

CHRISTIANITY A DOGMATIC, SACERDOTAL, AND SACRAMENTAL SYSTEM.

“ And I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord. For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain.”—ISAIAH lxvi. 21, 22.

MY theme to-night is this : Christianity is a dogmatic, sacerdotal, and sacramental system. Let me review what has been said thus far. We hear a demand for the readjustment of the Christian Religion to the conditions of modern society. We ask, first, what that religion is ? We find it to be, substantially, Jesus Christ, the Eternal Word, Incarnate. We ask, next, why He thus entered this world ? The answer to that question is found in the picture presented by the world when He came. The scene was one of intellectual, moral, and religious confusion ; that confusion the outcome of unregulated thought. Men did not like to retain God in their thoughts ; and God had suffered them to walk in their own ways,¹ and chaos was the result. The

¹ Acts xiv. 16.

earth was a scene of disorder and riot. Polytheism, skepticism, atheism, polygamy, and slavery; crime, mentionable and unmentionable; oppression, injustice, and misery; the reign of the strong over the weak, of might over right; superstitions, devil-worship, obscenity; these meet the eye as one opens the records of the past. But these things are the fruit of unchecked human passion; and human passion is unchecked when the active intellect revolts from God and becomes a law to itself. To save a world thus lost, the Christian Religion was set up among us. What was that Religion? A gospel of truth proclaimed to a world lying in wickedness through ignorance of the truth. Fact is the opposite of opinion; fact is the cure for fancy. And Jesus Christ came into the world, a Fact, to help men stifled in a drench of opinions; a Truth to dissipate mere shadows of truth; a Reality to put an end to the unreality of a vain show. That is our statement of the case. God's remedy for the mischief wrought by self-sufficient private judgment was the exhibition of objective truth, which man can neither discover, nor modify, nor change. "*The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld His Glory, the Glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*"¹ The Presence of God among men—not by way of representative, nor by sign, symbol, or letter, but in Person—this was the divine remedy for the "*mad-*

¹ S. John i. 14.

*ness of the people."*¹ The Word Incarnate was intense Reality; a Reality independent of our thought. He entered, majestically, into the crowd of talkers, speculators, theorists, and inquirers; into the horde of sorcerers and pagan priests, adulterers, false swearers, and oppressors; He told them what and who He was; He demanded their prompt, unreserved, and unconditional submission. It is no question of opinions, but a matter of fact; no haggling with subtle dialecticians, but a challenge to them to leave off their profitless and interminable discussions, and repent, believe, and save their souls. It is not another philosopher, one moralist the more, to set up his petty school, and weave new webs of speculation; but it is the King coming to send among these mobs the two-edged sword of Truth, "piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart."² Such was the Religion as it first appeared, as first proclaimed by the Apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. Who ever heard from Him, or them, an uncertain sound, a syllable of compromise with the rationalistic schools of the day? The message is stern and straightforward. "I, Christ, must take, in thee, the place of everything else. Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this,

¹ Psalms lxxv. 7.² Heb. iv. 12.

that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I AM, Jehovah the Eternal. Go ye, My Apostles, into all the world; preach this to every creature: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. The world has had enough of its private judgments; they are nauseating; let the reign of fact and truth begin."¹ Thus commissioned the Twelve went forth and taught; and what they taught was positive and dogmatic; and the upgrowth was, not new schools, fresh workshops of opinion, more theories to flourish for a while, and die; but a Kingdom made up of men knit each to each, by loyal and all-daring devotion to One Lord Jesus Christ.

Such in its origin was that religion which we call by the Name of Christ. How was it to be propagated? How kept up until the end of the world? It is, substantially, the coming of God to His own: "the mystery of godliness is God manifest in the Flesh."² But what? Shall the presence be withdrawn? How could that be? We see not how. It looks to us as if, in that case, all must relapse into confusion. The Lord whom we worship and love is all powerful; He is not limited to one way; by any one of a hundred means He might have secured the permanence of the work which he began. But it seems to us that somehow or other He must stay among us; that His presence must be an en-

¹ Jer. ix. 23, 24; S. Matthew xxviii. 19; S. Mark xvi. 16.

² 1 Tim. iii. 16.

during presence. On this point, however, we are thrown simply on the study of history. It is not a question of opinion ; it is one of fact ; a question to be settled not by what you or I or another may think, but by witnesses competent to testify ; by records, if they can be found ; by monuments preserving the story of the past ; by testimony sufficient to prove what we wish to know. By study of such authorities without prepossession and without prejudice, we come to this : that as Christianity consisted, originally, in the manifestation of God in the Flesh, so Christianity continues to be a manifestation of God Incarnate, an abiding Presence of Christ with us in some real way, independent of our thoughts about the matter ; a Presence made by His power, and realized to us by our faith.

The word " EMMANUEL " expresses this condition of things. God with us, is the sum of the Christian religion. That is a proper description of the religion from the beginning to the end. *Emmanuel* : the meaning of the word was not exhausted in those blessed years, three and thirty in all, during which Christ was seen in Judæa and known as the prophet of Nazareth. It is as accurate, as necessary to-day ; it shall be true till all be fulfilled, till the earth and the heavens shall pass away and the new earth shall appear.¹ How can he help seeing this who will accept the evidence of those who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word, and

¹ Rev. xxi. 1.



of those who followed them ? Summon as witnesses the children of the kingdom, the members of the household ; apostle and evangelist, doctor and pastor, saint and martyr ; Clement, Ignatius, Augustine, Jerome, Gregory, Chrysostom, Irenæus, Cyprian, Cyril, Basil, Ambrose, and the rest, so great a cloud of witnesses ; study the religion in its documents, its records, traditions, liturgies ; and this comes forth, one constant belief, one perpetual assertion, that as the fact of God's visible presence among us constituted the beginning of the Gospel, so the fact of His continuous though invisible presence among us is the constitutive truth of the Gospel age after age ; that the restoration of the visible presence shall be granted at the supreme hour of His victory. This presence of the Personal God, a presence not made by our faith, but disclosed to our faith that we may believe and adore, is secured to the faithful in their generations by ordinances, instruments, and institutions adapted to that end.

But how is this done ? What is the system by which shall be perpetually realized to us men the presence of the Personal God ? I say the presence of God in Person : that is what we need ; not merely influence emanating from Him, talk of Him, symbols to help us to think of Him, subjective impressions of our own concerning Him ; but Himself. That system is known as the Holy Catholic Church. That Church is described in the Scripture as a " Body," and a " Kingdom." Christ announced



the intention to found it, the determination to protect and defend it. "On this rock," that is, as the fathers say, on the rock of His own divinity, "I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."¹ The Church is called a Body, and a Kingdom; these descriptive names are significant. They carry us out of the region of things speculative and into that of fact and reality. A kingdom is an organization; a body is a vital organism. A kingdom may hold restless and troublesome speculators within it; a body may contain a fanciful, unstable soul. But the kingdom and the body are not to be confounded with our notions about them, nor with the thought-work or hand-work accomplished by their agency. In and by a practical visible organization, in and by a vital spiritual organism, God was to remain personally present among men, "*omnibus diebus usque ad consummationem sæculi.*"² "Lo, I am with you all days, even unto the end of the world." And as is the case with many other of the operations, of His hands, this arrangement for keeping us in the truth is partly simplicity, and partly mystery. There are aspects in which the body and the kingdom look as if we could understand them; there are others in which, study as we will, we are baffled by what we see. Therefore this also is an article of the faith, this confession of ours, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church." It was revealed to faith, not

¹ S. Matt. xvi. 18.² S. Matt. xxviii. 20.

to sight, that God was in the world, in that worn and defaced Figure which men beheld in the Holy Land long ago, and on which they looked with amazement and absolute incredulity when it hung before them crucified on the gibbet. It is revealed to faith, not to sight, that God is now in the world, in that sadly-rent and sore-tried Mystical Body of His, and under the simple rites which announce His neighborhood and realize it to us. "*I believe in God :*" yea, moreover, "*I believe in one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.*" They are articles of one and the same body of truth.

And now let us see how, under this abiding mystery, He meets us, and how the religion works along the lines of character and life. Remember, always, that the religion is still, as ever, Jesus Christ the Son of God the Saviour. What He is, that must the religion be, which is but Himself in a supplemental manifestation. They who accept the religion find themselves at once in a zone of spiritual and supernatural facts. They are initiated into a Kingdom and grafted into a Body; they are brought into living relation with the powers of the world to come. Those powers act first for the regeneration of the nature. Man "must be born again;"¹ and this is the work of the Holy Ghost, who "worketh where He listeth," as "Lord and Giver of Life."² The entrance into this Kingdom and this Body is effected through a sacrament, as

¹ S. John iii. 3.

² Nicene Creed.

- through a portal ; “ the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace ; ” ¹ grace and sign one, so that the grace cannot be had but through the sign, and that whenever the sign is duly exhibited to a qualified subject the grace is surely given. By baptism a man is made a member of Christ’s Body ; the stupendous mystery of the Incarnation takes him up into itself ; the door of the Father’s house is opened wide ; he enters, the adopted child of God. What presence can be closer than that of one’s own flesh ? Why, in Holy Matrimony, are man and wife one, unless because therein they are made one flesh ? It is the apostle’s argument : “ He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it.” ² Even so with the Lord and the Church, “ for,” saith the apostle, “ we are members of His Body, of His Flesh, and of His Bones.” ³ So then in Holy Baptism men are taken into God, in such wise that He and they are united in the Flesh of Jesus Christ, and Christ is Present with them and they with Him ; nor can words be found more apt to express it than those in which each little child declares his faith, when, taught by our loving Mother, he acknowledges himself to be “ a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven.” ⁴

What begins in one mystery is maintained in an-

¹ Church Catechism.

² Ephes. v. 29.

³ Ephes. v. 30.

⁴ Church Catechism.

other. New-born into the Body and the Kingdom by supernatural means, we are nourished and kept alive by ordinances which are also supernatural. The Body and Blood of Christ are to be the food of souls. Nor are these a dead body and a dead blood ; God forbid ! But they are the True Body and Blood of that Christ who was dead and is alive for evermore. Nor yet do we feed on them ideally and in imagination, in contemplation merely and devout reverie ; for then were we back again in the old slough of "views," theories, and opinions. But this is a true feeding on a True Body ; the Presence which came to man from without, confronting him, and demanding his allegiance, still confronts him and asks his love. In one mystical ordinance men enter as living souls into the Kingdom ; in another they feed upon the tree of life in that new Kingdom, and their life becometh "a long life, even forever and ever."¹

Thus made alive, and thus kept alive, man has all that he needs for the full development of his nature ; all, at the cost of one thing, self-renouncing faith. The intellect, the heart, the affections, the imagination, the will ; God has taken thought for all and made provision for all. The moral sense, the æsthetic sense, the spiritual sense, yea, moreover, the physical sense ; these, which go to make up the full man, are met and satisfied, and from a plane higher than that of this present existence. "For

¹ Psalms xxi. 4.



Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him.”¹ And the man who is in Christ is brought into life and immortality, and, by faith, inherits the promise, “he that believeth in Me, though he were dead yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.”² To each demand of the regenerate nature comes a response from the world above. The intellect finds its object of supreme contemplation in that God to whom it owes its ransom from the bedlam of doubt. The moral nature finds its rule of action in that law “whose seat is the bosom of God, and whose voice is the harmony of the world.” The imagination sees, as in a mirror, that infinite beauty which fills, absorbs, and makes it content. We who were born in Christianity, and bred up in its ways, who dwell in an atmosphere saturated with its ideas, and live and move and have our being in it, can with difficulty, if at all, conceive what its relation must have been to men distracted by pagan philosophy, demoralized by pagan maxims, and degraded by pagan sins. It must have been like emerging from pestilential charnels and nocturnal paths into the broad daylight, the green pastures, and unspeakable inner peace. “My Peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you.”³ They found themselves at once provided with a faith for the mind, a law for the life,

¹ Romans vi. 9.

² S. John xi. 25, 26.

³ S. John xiv. 27.



grace for the heart, and a straight road to God. In that religion was the satisfaction of the "desire of all nations :"¹ truth for the intellect, to guide it in things natural, to bring within its reach things supernatural. In that religion was exhibited the solitary instance of a perfect life, and that life was cheerfully proposed for imitation. In that religion were the germs of a stately and sublime ritual, such as might fill the senses with a beauty which affects them, and satisfy the impulse to "worship the Lord with holy worship."² Faith had its object ; the will its motive ; freedom its test. Yet everything centred in Jesus Christ : He was the sum and substance of all. To believe, was to believe in Him ; to live aright, was to imitate him ; to worship acceptably, was to worship through Him. "Through Jesus Christ our Lord : " it is the formula of the Church's perpetual devotion ; when to the Almighty Father she presents Jesus Christ, and herself in Him, and prays for what she needs through that Oblation without which none may come to the Father. Here are the truth, the law, the service of the kingdom ; and this is an everlasting kingdom which shall not pass away.

I have shown you how it pleased God to maintain His Personal Presence among us. It is tiresome to repeat ; but there are truths which need to be incessantly repeated in order that they may stick fast in the mind of the hearer, and stay there ; for

¹ Haggai ii. 7.

² Psalms xxix. 2.

the words of this teaching are "as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies."¹ I shall therefore wind up this evening's instruction by impressing on you what it seems to me most necessary to remember, when considering our question of the readjustment of Christianity to the needs of the day. Let me say what it were no harm to repeat over and over till every man, woman, and child in the congregation knew it by heart.

The system of the Holy Catholic Church, as displayed in its authentic documents, is dogmatic, sacerdotal, and sacramental. It was certainly that at first. Dogmatic: for Christ demanded a confession of His Divinity, and directed his apostles to teach a certain positive truth; and neither could be done without dogmatic language. Sacerdotal: for Christ was a Priest, in the strict sense of the word; and He offered a sacrifice as every priest must. Sacramental: for He instituted two great sacraments, and said that without these, ordinarily, no man can be saved.* What shall hinder us from drawing the conclusion that a system which began as dogmatic, sacerdotal, and sacramental, was intended to retain that character? What other conclusion is reasonable? What can upset the presumption? Certainly the burden of proof rests on those who take a different view; and so heavily does it press on them that they find no escape from

¹ Eccles. xii. 11.

* S. Mark xvi. 16; S. John vi. 53.



their difficulty but to assume, at the start, that "sacerdotalism" and "sacramentalism" must be false, just as the infidel assumes, in his argument against Christianity, that, anyhow, "supernaturalism" *must* be rejected as incredible. Let us have no unproved allegations of that sort; let us hear the witnesses. Undoubtedly the religion was at first dogmatic, sacerdotal, and sacramental. Christ came into this world a High Priest, to make an atonement for sin; "He suffered for our sins, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."¹ He did not cease to be a High Priest when He left the earth; the work goes on perpetually; what He did on earth was only the beginning of a long, long office and ministry: "He abideth a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."² The presence by which men were helped, and brought out of darkness into light, was the personal presence of One who is called by the sacerdotal name, and does the sacerdotal work. *Ἀρχιερεύς* (Greek), Pontifex (Latin), High Priest (English). Again it was a sacramental system, having ordinances which bear that name; rites, simple at first glance, but containing what defies the human wit to explain; rites, so strange that the carnal mind has ever revolted from what we are taught concerning them, as when we are required to believe that together with an affusion of water God the Holy Ghost appropriates a human soul and makes of a human body a temple for Himself to dwell in; or,

¹ I Peter iii. 18.² Hebrews vi. 20.

harder still, when we are told that, by tasting of what, to the eye of sense, are mere bread and wine, we feed on that Body and Blood of Christ where-with He purchased the salvation of men, and which are inseparably united to the Godhead in His Person, and that our sinful bodies are made clean by His Body, and our souls washed through His most Precious Blood.

Next, mark, that what this system was at first, it continues to be. The Priest never dies; the Religion is Himself; the Body is that of the High Priest, its life is that of its Head, all its members are priests unto God.¹ The sacraments instituted by Him are "generally necessary unto salvation." Men are lifted out of the natural order and placed in the supernatural. By a hierarchy here on earth the divine priesthood of Jesus Christ is made efficient; and through mystical rites does the vital current of the Incarnate Life flow on.²

Once more, what came as a Fact remains a Fact. What was God's at the beginning is God's to-day. The system was not the invention of men; it grew not out of their thoughts; it cannot be affected by their theories or fancies, save in this way, that it may be hidden from their sight, and so rendered ineffective so far as they are concerned. Above us is a broad firmament, toward which we may ascend; or

¹ 1 Peter ii. 5, 9; Rev. i. 6.

² See the whole body of the Fathers for the first 600 years *passim*, also all the ancient liturgies, *à discretion*.



else, if we prefer, we may blindfold ourselves, shut out deliberately the magnificent view, and, groping about here, after the manner of the philosophers, go daily deeper into the darkness of our own thoughts.

If now you ask me how we know that this was and is the system, and that these were its objects, I reply, that we know it from history. The Church exists to-day; her annals fill the world: we trace them as we trace those of earthly empires; we can thus go back a hundred years, three hundred, twelve hundred; it is a case of simple historical investigation. From the prelate who presides over this diocese to Seabury and White, from Sumner and Blomfield to Ken and Laud; back still to the Innocents and the Gregories; to Augustine of Canterbury and Augustine of Africa; to Chrysostom and Irenæus and Ignatius; to Clement and Linus; to Timothy and Titus, and up to the days of the Apostles; it is plain walking, plain enough for any child. Men have disputed concerning the few first years, taking advantage of what slight mist may overhang the prospect. But the moment the veil lifts, and things come clearly into view, we see in substance what is seen to-day; a Visible Church, herself a mystery, claiming to be of divine institution, and to have the everlasting promises, organized under a settled government,¹ performing her functions through a hierarchy, converting the nations by the

¹ Time is closing up some lines of controversy. The reader is referred to Bishop Lightfoot's recently published



preaching of an Atoning Mediator between heaven and earth, healing them by the waters of baptism, feeding them by the sacramental bread and wine. She teaches men the Way, the Truth, the Life, in Jesus Christ ; she brings men into the Kingdom of Jesus Christ ; she keeps them up to their duty by helps from Jesus Christ ; she worships God in solemn liturgy, through Jesus Christ ; she teaches them to think true thoughts, to do right acts, and lift up holy hands, "to love mercy, do justly, and walk humbly with their God." This is but Natural Religion carried out in and through the Incarnation of the Word. It is Knowledge and Moral-

work on the Apostolic Fathers, for what must be considered as the finishing strokes in the Ignatian controversy. "It is plain that in those parts of Syria and Asia Minor, at all events, with which Ignatius is brought in contact, the Episcopate, properly so called, is an established and recognized institution." . . . "The strange audacity of writers like Daillé, who placed the establishment of Episcopacy as late as the beginning of the third century, need not detain us ; for no critic of the Ignatian epistles, however adverse, would venture now to take up this extreme position." . . . "Throughout Asia Minor and Syria it (the Episcopate) was universal. Probably also this was the case in the farther East. So likewise," he continues, with "the Gallican churches," which "would naturally adopt the organization which prevailed in the communities in Asia Minor from which they were spiritually descended." And again, "it would be an excess of skepticism, with the evidence before us, to question the existence of the Episcopate as a distinct office from the presbyterate in the Roman Church" (The



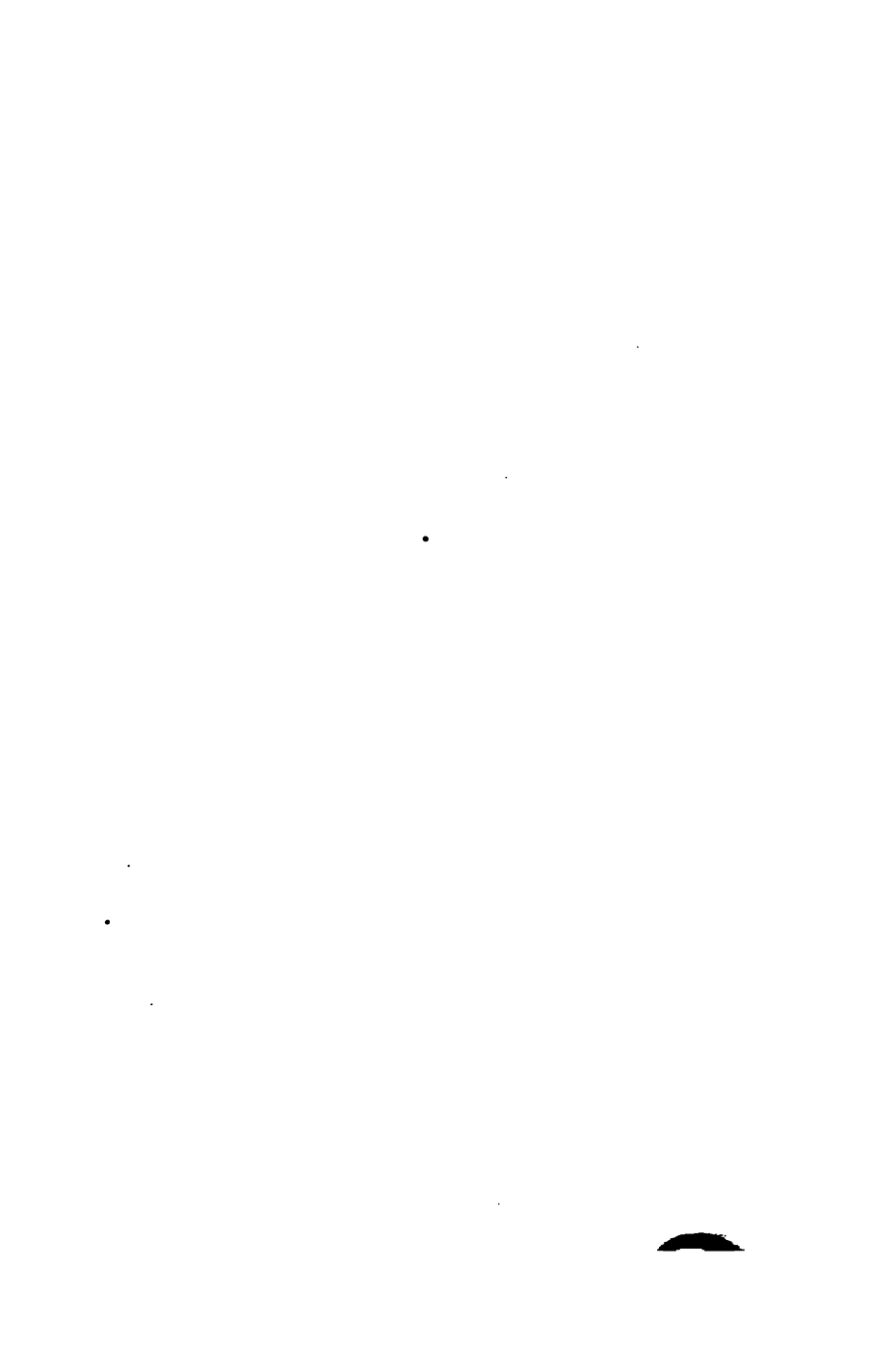
ity, it is Love and Obedience, it is Joy and Praise. And this is Christianity; this is the Religion of Jesus Christ; this is what men desire to readjust. To venture on such a work, while in ignorance of what the religion is, would be madness. To venture on such a work refusing to hear and accept the Church's own account of herself, suppressing her own witness, taking the testimony of the partisan who hates the characteristic elements of her system, assuming that we know more about Christianity than they who went before us, this would not merely be impiety and rebellion, it would be the folly which defeats itself. God save us and the age from any

Apostolic Fathers, Part II., S. Ignatius, S. Polycarp, by J. B. Lightfoot, D.D., D.C.L., LL.D., Bishop of Durham, vol. i., pp. 376-77, 380-81). These conclusions are the more important, because of the well-known view of the learned Bishop, which he still maintains, that the New Testament contains no direct and indisputable notices of a localized Episcopate in the Gentile churches; a movable one he admits. But this is to narrow the thing down to so fine a point that there seems little left worth contending for by the opponents of Episcopacy, and the statement in the Preface to our Ordinal is fully justified by this great student and scholar; while our contention is strengthened, that the fact of its extension, and general recognition, during the life-time of the contemporaries of our Lord and the companions and pupils of His apostles, is strong presumptive evidence of its Divine institution, so strong that the burden lies on those who deny it; while they ought surely to give us something better than their private interpretation of the New Testament, unverified by the general witness of the Church.

more work like that, and bring men back by His persuasive power, till the mind of the children turn to the fathers, and till we who see in the records of the past the image of present sorrows, see also in the mode whereby men were helped once, the one and only way in which those can be rescued now, whose steps are gone astray and "whose life draweth nigh unto hell."



**The Anti-Sacramental and Anti-Dog-
matic Spirit in the Church is
Essentially the Same as the
Spirit of Philosophic
Rationalism.**



LECTURE IV.

THE ANTI-SACRAMENTAL AND ANTI-DOGMATIC SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH IS ESSENTIALLY THE SAME AS THE SPIRIT OF PHILOSOPHIC RATIONALISM.

"The shew of their countenance doth witness against them."—ISAIAH iii. 9.

IN proceeding with my subject this evening, let me commence by observing that we have reached a dividing-point in these Conferences. I have spoken to you, thus far, of Christ, and of the Church. Men have talked, and are talking still, of some notable things which they propose to do, by way of commending Christ and the Church to the confidence and regard of the age. I doubt whether this can be done, while the age remains what it is, without sacrificing Christ and the Church to the Spirit of the Age. Unfortunately these reform measures invariably involve assaults, covert or open, on the Church of History and the Christ of the Catholic Creed. The Church which shall be accepted of the age must be a new Church, an undogmatic Church, a Church having neither priesthood nor sacraments; the organization which has existed



from the Apostles' time¹ is to be swept away ; we shall have a liberal and free republic in place of the old Kingdom of God. I submit that in the course of these readjustments Christianity itself would be destroyed, and that this religion of Neo-Christianity would have no better title to the last half of the name than the religion of Mahomet or of Mormon.² And the Christ who is to reclaim the allegiance of the coming age is to be either our own Lord, dragged from His throne and degraded to our level, as man and man only, or else it is to be an ideal Christ, distilled from the alembic of philosophic thought and floating wisp-like through man's religious dream. One of our modern rationalists averred, not long since, that he had never known how much he owed to Christ until he left off worshipping Him as God and came to see Him as a mere man like himself. That is readjustment with a vengeance ; and with equal modesty is it announced by others that the Church is no organized and visible Kingdom, but the expression of continuous Christian thought. Assumptions like these indicate the mind of the day. We meet them by the counter-statements that Christ and the Church are one ; that Christ cannot be readjusted, because He is God over us all ; that

¹ " It is evident unto all men, diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons" (Preface to Ordinal).

² H. N. Oxenham : *Catholic Eschatology*, p. xviii.

the Church cannot be readjusted, as to her faith, her constitution, and her powers, because she is the Body of Christ and the Kingdom of God, and, like her divine Head, "the same" in those respects "yesterday, and to-day, and forever."

I fear not to assert, and am sure of being able to maintain, that in the modern proposals to revise, correct, and amend the Christian Religion as thus far presented, there is invariably a tendency to obscure the truth concerning Jesus Christ as God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, consubstantial with the Father, and to upset the Church as a dogmatic, sacerdotal, and sacramental system, an organized Kingdom, and a living witness to the Living God. Let us now proceed to inquire whence these proposals come. They come from the outside world. The voice which we hear is the voice of the spirit of the age. And to know exactly what weight it carries, we must make a brief study of the condition of the world at the present day. We must ask whether, to any extent, old phenomena have reappeared, whether old positions have been occupied anew ; whether signs can be detected of a trouble substantially the same as that under which society was laboring in the day when Christ came among us. If these things are so, we may proceed to ask whether any general cause of the trouble can be detected ; we must know what it is. Step by step the conclusion may be reached, that the modern revolt from Christ and the Church,



from the Christ of the Creed and the Church of History, is due to the working of a rationalistic philosophy among us ; and furthermore, that this philosophic spirit has infected and does powerfully influence large numbers of persons classed as Christians in our tables of statistics of religion. There is a unity in truth ; there is a similar unity in error. All truth is one, all error is one. And it looks as if the spirit of anti-dogmatic, anti-sacramental, and anti-sacerdotal Protestantism—the spirit which, justifying its name, protests perpetually against the principles and system of the Church—is actually a mild or mitigated form of that very rationalism which denies the supernatural, rejects revelation, and finds no place for God in the world or for Christ in the human heart and soul. I think it can be shown that the choice to-day is between a faith which reposes in a revelation to us through Christ and the Church, and an incertitude which is the natural outcome of modern philosophic rationalism. And what I call you to observe next is, that the religious community is deeply infected with that spirit ; and that our danger does not lie at all in the existence of that spirit (for it is the old spirit of anti-christ which has been at work from the beginning, and shall continue to let until it be taken away¹), but in this portentous fact, that it is so largely developed among those who bear the Christian name

¹ 2 Thess. ii. 7.

and are taken by the community for representatives of the Christian Religion.

In speaking of the second coming of the Lord, S. Paul says that, before that day arrives, there shall be "a falling away;"¹ some wide and general apostasy, some notable abandonment of religion. His words do but echo the Master's question: "When the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?"² Many are convinced that the signs of the times prognosticate the approach of that appalling state of things. There is a very long "Danger-line," on which trouble is brewing from one end to the other, from the right wing down through the centre to the left. I hope I am not uncharitable; I should be glad if it could be shown that my view of the matter is incorrect; but it looks as if the truth was in danger of being slaughtered in the house of its friends, in their inveterate habit of condoning heresy and compromising with error. Here are men who bear the name of Christ, and men who reject Him; see how the colors, from the brightness of belief to the blackness of infidelity, shade imperceptibly into one another. Stand these men up like soldiers in line, dressed right, a smooth, long front; glance at the perspective and mark well what you see. "The parade is formed." Go slowly along the ranks: what have we here? orthodox and unorthodox, old schools and new schools, trinita-

¹ 2 Thess. ii. 3.

² S. Luke xviii. 8.

rian Christian and unitarian Christian, Calvinistic Christian and Universalist Christian, stiff and old-fashioned, easy and liberal. Farther on we come to skeptics, agnostics, and infidels. Now if you study this enormously long line of men, if, like an inspecting officer, you pass up and down the ranks, resolved to find out how their thoughts work, and to reach the final principle on which they would stake their convictions, you may come to this conclusion, that far apart as the extremities are—and it is like the distance from east to west—yet is there among them a certain unity, one common habit of thought, a marked likeness which proves relationship. Let us put the believers in the right wing and the unbelievers in the left. In the beliefs and unbeliefs there is the resemblance of a common origin ; a final principle of negation which makes the whole company kin. I shall try to justify this view of the case by citing certain peculiar characteristics of the popular religion of the day.

That it has its marked characteristics is what no thoughtful observer can doubt : that these are also the characteristics of the popular unbelief of the day seems to need no demonstration. Take, for example, the intense dislike of dogmatic teaching. You find it just as strongly marked in Christian congregations as in the infidel schools. "The time shall come when they will not endure sound doctrine."¹ What description more accurately fits the age,

¹ 2 Tim. iv. 3.

whether it be considered on the religious or the irreligious side? Read the reports of the sermons of the Sunday in Monday's newspaper: how seldom do you light on aught to help or cheer you? The favorite orator is he who most boldly asserts his independence of theological trammels, who most noisily and insolently defies the authority of the Church.¹ There are many devout and learned men who preach the simple Gospel, honestly, to their flocks, and are never mentioned; while he who fills the air with paradoxes, extravagances, and fanciful conceits of his own may count on having his discourses reported in full, and scattered in hundreds of thousands of copies all over the land. "We want no dogma," say the people; "we want electric, magnetic, original men; something fresh, new, bold, something to oust the old theology. Out of the old ruts! let us have new departures, new phrases, new formulas!" It is the language of many who still profess themselves Christians. To what does this tend? What does it imply? Observe, and be it never forgotten, that without dogmatic terms it is impossible to state what Christianity is. Unless I use the words of the Creed, I cannot tell you, or myself, or anyone else, "who the Son of Man is," or what I owe to Him, or what He does for me. Is the dislike of those words, the disgust for those intelligible terms, which I find among

¹ " *The Church hath authority in controversies of faith.*"
—Art. xx.



believers and unbelievers alike, a sign that the believer is at his last gasp, and about to surrender to the unbeliever? Is it a sign that the believer is nearing the point at which he will confess himself of Hegel rather than of Christ? Here stands a group of men saying, "We are Christians; we believe in Christ; but we want nothing doctrinal or dogmatic; we accept the Bible, but we want no dogmatic religion." Some way off is another group who say: "We cordially agree with you in your disgust for doctrine and dogma; but you do not go far enough; more consistent than you, we reject the Bible and religion of any kind; the old theology is obsolete verbiage; men have outgrown it; let it die out of mind." The distance between these groups may seem far; but the path from one to the other is direct and smooth.

Another characteristic of popular religion is its indifference to truth. It is alleged: Whatever one thinks to be true is good enough truth for him. The logical conclusions, drawn by the younger minds, are that truth is an uncertain thing, that it is of very small importance, that there is no such thing as truth outside the mind of the individual thinker. The religionist who says that the faith cannot be wrong while the life is right, and that it makes no difference what a man believes so long as he is conscientious and sincere, is the natural ally of the skeptic, the agnostic, and the infidel. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you

free : ”¹ so spoke the Author and Finisher of our faith. Yet here—amazing sight!—are Christians, who, either through fear of giving offence, or from a nervous dread of seeming to take too much upon themselves, are so excessively guarded that you cannot tell what they hold ; they will affirm nothing without an apology for their boldness ; they would not say of any particular truth that belief in it is necessary unto salvation, or of any particular error that it is fatal to the soul. What is this but substantially the position of the rationalist and the skeptic ? His creed has been cleverly summed up as follows :

1. It is uncertain whether Truth exists.
2. It is certain that it cannot be found.
3. It is folly to boast of possessing it.
4. Man’s work and duty consist, not in possessing but in seeking it.
5. His happiness and true dignity consist in the pursuit of it.
6. The pursuit of truth is an end, to be engaged in for its own sake.
7. As philosophy is the love, but not the possession, of wisdom, so religion is the love, but not the possession, of truth.

Such is the view of the skeptic. The truth is not a fixed, defined, and well-known treasure which, like the pearl of great price, may be had by you, by me, by any one who will give what it costs and

¹ S. John viii. 32.

buy it ; but it is an indefinable, unattainable, unthinkable somewhat, never to be discovered in this world ; while the chase of this ignis fatuus, though aware that it will perpetually elude pursuit, is noble, delicious, and elevating beyond all other things. And if one dare to stand up and deny a position so absurd, and say, " I know whom I have believed ; I have the truth ; you may have it also if you will," at once an uproar is made ; the whole city is filled with confusion, as when S. Paul set the worshippers of Diana by the ears ; some cry one thing and some another ; it is said, that this is dogmatism and presumption ; that all are right who are sincere ; that he is superstitious who pretends to know more than the rest ; that all creeds are right in a way ; that the truth is within the heart, and not outside of us ; with other confused exclamations, which amount in sum total to the denial of these first principles in religion—that truth is truth, whether men know it or not, and that any man may know it if he seek it in the right way.

To pass to the consideration of another characteristic of popular religion—the repudiation of the sacerdotal and sacramental system by those who, notwithstanding, believe in the priesthood and sacrifice of Christ. It is easy to trace the relationship between believers of this class and men who reject not only the sacerdotal and sacramental in religion in general, but the priesthood and atoning work of the Lord also. The prevalence of a widespread in-

difference to religion is a formidable aspect of the day. That indifference is shown by the educated and the ignorant alike; the *jeunesse dorée* of our time, the youth of our schools and universities, on whom we should be relying for our civil and social security in the coming age, are infected,

“Sickening of a vague disease;”

while the toiling masses of the people, the laboring classes, are, to an appalling extent, alienated from Christian faith and Christian standards of morals. What wonder that this is so? It sounds sometimes as if a great cry were going up all over the land, because there is no household but has its dead—dead to faith, dead to Christ, dead to the hope of a better life. Why not? Consider that for a hundred years or more it has been the effort of religious teachers of the so-called evangelical school to kill belief in the Church, the sacraments, and the liturgical and institutional ordinances of Christianity; this has been their aim, and they have succeeded beyond their hopes. For years, and years, and years, we have heard teaching like this: “You must believe in Christ, but in Christ apart from the Church, and apart from the sacraments, and apart from dogma and form. Christ is all. The Church has, practically, nothing to do with your salvation, being only an invisible body of good persons known to God, without general organization, or law-making power, or means of exercising control or discipline.



Sacraments, except as bare signs, have no value; they are not saving ordinances; never mind the sacraments, as long as you have Christ." The logical outcome is seen in the apathy of many, and the absolute hostility of more. Why should they "hear the Church?" It has been dinned into their ears incessantly that the Church is not a reality, but a name. Why should they submit to baptism or receive Holy Communion? It has been dinned into them perpetually that sacraments hide Christ. And experience demonstrates this, that when Christ is thus preached "of envy and contention," divorced from His Church, which is His Body and His Bride, and robbed of those sacraments which He instituted as "generally necessary to salvation,"¹ the dethronement of Christ Himself is not far away. Think this out; test it by the history of rational religion. That the priesthood was changed,² not abolished; that a line of Christian priests succeeded the old line of Levi; that there are men among us who, by virtue of their ordination can do what no one else can do unless in like manner ordained; that these men are stewards of the mysteries of God, officially entrusted with them and dispensing them; these ideas are regarded by many Christian people as relics of Romish superstition. The only ministry they recognize is that of preacher of the word and

¹ Church Catechism: *generaliter*, i.e., to men in general.

² "The priesthood being changed," not abolished (Hebrews vii. 12).

head of a congregation, who takes his commission from the people, and has no gifts differing in kind from those of his flock. The ordinances commonly called sacraments, if retained, are to be regarded merely as edifying forms or relics of antiquity. Baptism may be occasionally administered, but with no superstitious impression of its necessity ; it is a sign to outsiders ; it expresses the belief that God has already accomplished a work of grace in the soul, or the hope that He will do so at some future epoch. The new birth into Christ may come before baptism or after ; the one moment of time in which it *cannot* come is that in which baptism is administered. As for the Lord's Supper, it should be considered only as a commemorative feast, or, at the utmost, as a venerable ordinance, on occasion of which (though not *by* which, instrumentally) God helps pious Christians with the ordinary influences of religion. Regeneration in baptism, the Real Presence of the Lord in Holy Communion, the grace of holy orders, the strength in Confirmation, the sacramental dignity and sanctity of Holy Matrimony, the benefit of Absolution—these are all rejected as parts of an effete and cumbrous system of error. It is not seen what use there is of Bishops in the Church, while the idea of an Apostolic Succession is a subject for scornful mirth. Thus do men go on, professing to believe in Christ, but rejecting the ordinances and institutions of the religion which, from of old, has borne His name. They think they can do this with im-

punity, and that this persistent habit of denial and protest will not eventually tell against the things they still hold as true. They do not seem to observe that in principle they are one with the opponents of Christianity and the enemies of the Cross. Close to them are men who reject not merely the sacerdotal and the sacramental, but the supernatural to boot, and call them (justly?) weak and inconsistent in stopping where they do; who reject the supernatural *in* the Church and *out* of it, in the ordinances of religion and also in the Scriptures, in the human priest and in the Divine High Priest also, in history, in personal experience, in the government of the world, in the laws of the universe. They do not observe where the road toward the platform of naked Naturalism begins; that it is paved by the negations uttered by men of the Christian name; that the difference between those at the one end of the line and those at the other is not so much a difference on the essential principle of rationalism as a difference in the amount of resistance to its coercive force.

Once more, consider a fact already referred to, the dying out of the Worship of Almighty God, and the forsaking of the public services of religion. Is not this the result of the rejection of the liturgical and ritual system which came down to us from our fathers? Is it not the outcome of undue exaltation of the pulpit, and the minimizing of everything else in comparison with the work of the

preacher? Attendance at church has for its main object, among these perverted Christians, the hearing a discourse; that is the principal feature of the occasion; to worship God is a secondary intention. The altars, you know, were thrown down by Christian hands, under pretence of abating superstition, and the pulpit was lifted up in their place.¹ Well, to-day we find the temples of religion all but empty, unless some remarkable preacher be there to attract the curious crowd. Divine service is neglected; any slight excuse keeps him at home whose conscience is yet tender; the majority make no excuse; Sunday is the day for the parks, for excursions up the river or down the bay, for museums and galleries, for entertainment and recreation, without pretence of any religious exercise. And, when the altars were thrown down the "beauty of holiness" vanished, together with the idea of the solemn sacrifice and oblation. The house of God could not be made too plain; the rites performed therein could not be too severe; stiff, cold, and hard was the look of the "meeting-house"² which replaced the abbey and the cathedral; no music, no lights, no vestments, nor processions, nor choral song; no crosses

¹ See Lectures on the First Book of King Edward IV. E. & J. B. Young & Co.

² It is matter of history that the New England Puritans rejected the name of church, and insisted that their places of assemblage should be called "meeting-house;" the town-meetings were held in them.

and banners, no incense cloud, no peal of organs, no solemn chant of white-robed choir. The result has come, in the growing neglect of the day of God and the house of God; while we hear the cry of those who demand a general secularization of Church property, and would fain sweep all religion away, and bid us cease to worship God and worship man instead; man in the age, man in national progress, man in the triumphs of the mind.

Let me note one more sign of the times. I refer to the corrupting of the moral sense of the people by setting up standards diverse from those of the law of God. Concession is made to those who seek freedom to sin, until it seems as if little remained to concede. And with this disappears the motive to noble actions. The rejection of supernatural influences leads directly to the refusal to attempt or admire superhuman actions. The Heroic disappears, the fear of future punishment is lost. They who deny the eternal doom of the wicked grow in number; because men no longer realize the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Dare anyone perform a deed which, in past ages, would have crowned him with glory? Men now shake the head; they talk of foolhardiness and fanaticism, they will not imitate, they will not even approve. He who attempts the superhuman for the love of God is looked on with suspicion as a disturber of the general repose; such persons are not in harmony with the age, they must be warned of their eccentric turn, and bidden behave

themselves and live like other people. Thus among Christians the fear of God's just wrath is lulled to sleep, and the notion of a supernatural life and daring ventures of faith becomes but a dream. Now look farther on and see the logical end. You hear it said that there is no such thing as sin, nor any Moral Law-Giver, nor any Judge, nor even a hereafter; no hell for the sinner, and no heaven for the righteous; in short, that "there is no better thing for a man under the sun than that he should eat and drink and be merry, for that shall abide with him," but all besides is fiction and fancy, and death is an eternal sleep. Here is the Philosophy of Materialism and Naturalism full blown; it looks as if it came of the blunders of those whose duty it was to have kept alight among us the fires of love and sacrifice, kindled from that realm above the stars, and never to have ceased meanwhile to warn men of "the worm that dieth not and of the fire that is not quenched, whose smoke riseth up for ever and ever."¹

I could go on with this recital of the signs of the times: but enough has been said to illustrate the proposition with which I began. There is a remarkable unity in modern error. Here are large bodies of religious people who, differing widely on many points, agree in their dislike of dogmatic teaching, their indifference to positive truth, their rejection of the supernatural and mystical in ordinances, and their denial of the sacerdotal and sacra-

¹ S. Mark ix. 44. Rev. xix. 3.



mental character of Christianity. Far beyond them, a long distance off, are persons who have actually returned to the pagan platform and pagan views, who do not believe that God created the heavens and the earth, who have no faith in a future life, who believe in nothing higher than humanity. And between those protesting and rationalizing Christians and these avowed agnostics and infidels, moves a crowd of unsettled, confused, and half-distracted people, tossed about by winds of doctrine, now looking this way, now that way, knowing not what to do; they cannot go back, they dare not go on. They do not know what to believe; they cannot say what is right or what is wrong; they are one thing to-day, another thing to-morrow; to them God is "the unknown God;" there may or may not be a future; there may or may not be an immortal spirit in man. The old religion seems to them to be tottering to its fall, crumbling away; "the powers of heaven are shaken;" those majestic powers which once restrained the lawless, comforted the sorrowful, and exalted the lowly, these seem to have given up the ghost; the light grows dim. "Wo unto us! for the day of Christianity goeth away; for the shadows of the evening of a general skepticism are stretched out."¹

Now, what I call you to observe is, that the evil, from one extreme through the centre to the other extreme, and back thence to the starting-point, is one; that the cause of the trouble is one; that what

¹ Jeremiah vi. 4.

has brought men to this pass is the spirit of philosophic rationalism, eternal enemy of the Gospel. Moreover, I pray you to mark this, that the cries which reach our ear for essential modifications in the articles of the faith, reconstruction and readjustments, new terms in which to state old truths, freedom of thought and freedom of act, and leave to think and speak, every man under the inspiration of his own private *dæmon*, that these cries proceed from the midst of that scene of intellectual, moral, and religious confusion into which men, under the guidance of philosophy, disguised in Christian garb, have drifted. I pointed out to you, in my second lecture, the condition of the world before the Advent of Jesus Christ. Compare it with the state of the world to-day: is not the likeness strong? Do you not see the same perplexity, the same multiplying of shrines to suit the taste of uneasy worshippers, the same blind homage to an Unknown Power, the same state of uncertainty about everything in heaven, in earth, and under the earth? Are not men now frankly confessing their doubt of everything, till nothing seems left for them to doubt except their own existence? Do they not quarrel, as they did of old, about matter and mind, soul and spirit, and vex themselves to know how old the earth is, and how it was made, and whence the visible universe proceeded? Listen, and you might think you heard once more Thales and Lucretius, Anaximenes and Democritus, and

the rest, at it again in dispute and debate in our academies of science, and the precincts of our universities, where, perhaps, it is deemed a great merit to observe a strict neutrality on the subject of religion, and neither to express nor to have any settled opinion on the most momentous questions which can be proposed to the soul of man. And as the spiritual thus dwindles into its marasmus, the material waxes fat and lusts in the same old way; the worship which men deny to God, the love which they withhold from God, is conceded to the creature; a fleshy, carnal literature is eagerly read; nakedness is the *specialité* in art schools; women strip themselves bare to the public gaze; the fame of the professional beauty spreads from land to land, and the young fool runs after her till the dart strikes through his liver. The errors of the old time and of this are the same, the sins are the same. Is not the cause the same? And must not the remedy be the same? Look at this procession, with the personages whom we know so well; the philosopher, the hardened skeptic, the jester at sacred things, the immodest woman, the degraded slave, the bacchanal, the lascivious dancer—Pilate, Herod, Dives, Barabbas, Herodias and her daughter—the Sadducee, who believes in neither angel nor spirit; the Pharisee, case-hardened in his lofty contempt for other men: it is a thing to watch as it goes by, as dreadful as the train of phantom huntsmen who came

“ As drifting leaves come through the dell,”



circling their coveted prey, the soul of the hapless child, whom the mother, with cheek as April snow, clasped to her heart while they went around the Eildon tree.

Yes, watch it till your soul turns sick, and the sight becomes too much to bear, and until you ask the question : Is this the outcome of Christianity ? Is this the work of the Gospel ? Where lies the responsibility ? What is the explanation, and what the remedy ? Shall we reconstruct our religion, in hope to make things better ? or shall we let it go, and curse God and die ?

No, brethren, we shall do nothing of the kind ; we shall not curse God, we shall not die, we shall not reconstruct our religion, nor cease to hold fast our faith. Fitting effects to their causes, we shall maintain, and do our best to show, that philosophy is responsible for these things, and not the Church. Under the mask of religion the spirit of philosophy has been undoing the work of the Gospel ; it has rejected the ordinances and institutions divinely appointed to preserve the faith ; it has introduced the principle of rationalism into the seminaries of theology ; it has corrupted the original tradition ; it has set up new things in the room of the old ; it has made of the ministry obsequious trucklers to public opinion, and of the people self-confident critics ; it has narrowed the broad catholic truth to the formula of a sect, or evaporated positive doctrine into a mist and a sentiment ; and what we see before us is the

result. That thing which we call Paganism was the result of the attempts of men, first, to hold the truth in unrighteousness, and then to recover it by their own efforts after it was lost. The conditions of this age have been reached by a series of similar blunders and mistakes. If the world be ill of the same old sickness, the medicine is the same.

That seems to be the secret of the trouble. God Incarnate is not a Present, Living Fact ; He is but a thought, a feeling, a doctrine ; He is a distant moral and spiritual influence, a historical character like the old sages and benefactors of the world ; men no longer feel Him as a ruling monarch, whom they must obey. He provided against that very danger. He instituted a system whereby He should be realized to men, in which He should remain with them "all days, even to the end of the world." From that system they have revolted ; they have substituted for it other expedients ; and religion has come to be a constant dwelling on those inventions whereby they have hidden Him. And so all has gone back into the poor, weak brain of man ; and man, once more set in his own opinions, has walked back into the darkness to which they must inevitably lead. Now what shall we do ? Shall we make compromise with the revived paganism of our time ? Shame the thought. This is our hoary foe, beaten down by the good swords of the Christian soldiers of old time, and destined to a fresh defeat in the approaching day of better things. Shall we make



compromise with those bodies around us, whose strange position, in contrast with our own, I have endeavored to depict? Never, please God. For we could not do so but by surrendering the very principle which, if they had kept it, would have steadied them : obedience to authority, in place of private judgment ; submission to fact, in place of the fabrication of opinions. No, there is but one thing to do : to reinstate the Church Idea in the minds of men, to reaffirm the theology of the Incarnation, to present boldly the sacerdotal and sacramental system whereby it touches the life of man at every point ; and so to get unreality out of the minds and hearts, the principles and the actions, of the community. The readjustment is needed in men, not in the Religion which God gave them ; if we, on our part, are affected by the errors afloat, then *we* need readjustment also. That may be. If it is so, the Lord will help us to do the thing that ought to be done—on this condition, that we forsake our own way, our own wisdom, and make it our chief thought how we may bring back to a distracted and schism-rent household that salutary faith which alone can give it peace.





The Evil Work of Philosophy.

LECTURE V.

THE EVIL WORK OF PHILOSOPHY.

“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”—COLOSSIANS ii. 8.

WHEN the Apostle of the Gentiles addressed the men of Athens on Mars' Hill, he began by commending them for their great interest in the subject of religion. His words might be repeated with propriety in the case of our own people, throughout the land. None could justly accuse them of indifference to religious questions, or of a want of zeal in that behalf, sometimes according to knowledge and sometimes expended in vain. But there are religions and religions; and no contrast could be stronger than that between a religion once for all given to men in systematic form, and a religion evolving itself out of the human consciousness. The religion of evolution must be in perpetual flux, adjusting itself to times and seasons, and changing with the spirit of each successive age. There can be no concord between it and a religion of which the first heralds might properly declare, “Though we, or an



angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel to you than this which we preach, let him be accursed.”¹

The difficulties which beset the question of readjustment are largely due to varying notions as to the essential character of religion. Men talk about Christianity; they are not agreed as to what Christianity is. Some persons will tell you that Christianity is the name—since everything must have a name to make it intelligible—of a certain moral and spiritual force, unorganized, diffuse, and beneficently active in society. They will assure you that it is not an institution, nor a dogma, nor one of those things of which a pedigree can be written, a picture painted, or any exact account given; but that it is a motive, an inspiration, working out into benevolent and virtuous actions, and practically existent only in them. They will talk to you of Christianity as the pantheists talk of God and the world. The world is the evolution of the infinite substance, which takes new shapes from age to age, and Christianity is the latest development of the religious instinct in man—the latest, highest, and best thus far, though to be followed, no doubt, by something better still. Christianity is a complex thing; in part a memory, in part an enthusiasm, and in part a vision of aims unrealized. It contains in it a sentiment of personal attachment to One whom all agree to admire as a saintly man, and many worship as divine. It prompts to sympathy with other people, either

¹ Gal. i. 8.



through pity for human distress, or from the sense of a race-unity in interests and fortune. It gives a hope for the future, indefinite, yet sufficient to ward off despair as death advances for his last assault. Objectively regarded, Christianity is reducible to practical benevolence, charitable deeds, and a pure moral life. Subjectively it is to be kept alive by stirring up the emotions, by music, by fervid passion of prayer, by mutual converse, not, perchance, without mutual admiration. Such is Christianity, as seen under the lens of this keen, bright age. But, observe, it has no fixed form or definite outline ; it cannot be reduced to a system ; it cannot be described in terms of this world, nor is there in it any place for exact definitions and articles of faith. It has no more outward shape than heat or electricity or the forces of nature, being, indeed, spiritual, formless, void, a kind of sacred medium wherein churches, denominations, schools, and individuals whirl up and down and round about. Such appears to be the view of Christianity taken by the broad and liberal mind. And there could not be a stronger contrast between this conception of Christianity and that which they entertain who believe in a visible Church, and an organized Body, and look to Christ as the Lord of a Kingdom complete in its appointments, and as easily to be identified and described as any secular government in any age.

So, when we return to our old question, " Is there need of a readjustment of Christianity to suit the

times in which we live?" it seems that a double answer must be given. We answer, Yes; we answer, No. If by Christianity you mean that loose agency which I have endeavored to fix for the moment for purposes of examination, or its practical outcome in the flabby, anæmic religionism around us, we say, Yes; that certainly needs readjustment, or rather one might say that they who think thus of Christianity need very vigorous treatment of some sort, call it what you please. But if by Christianity you mean the old Gospel, which propounds to faith a cycle of truth "not after man,"¹ not discovered nor invented by man, nor evolved out of his inward parts, but taught to him "by the revelation of Jesus Christ,"² and applies that truth by means of divinely-appointed ordinances unto his salvation and sanctification, we answer, No; that religion needs no readjustment: the age must be readjusted to it, not it to the age.

But which of these two statements of the character and essential nature of Christianity is true? The question, like any question of fact, must be settled by the process of historic investigation. It is, moreover, a complicated question: it affects us churchmen, first, in our relation to the rationalism of the day, and, next, in our attitude toward other bodies of Christians. It brings before us for consideration that view of Christianity which may be regarded as the most attenuated, in which scarcely any original

¹ Gal. i. 11.

² Gal. i. 21.

element of Christianity can be discerned remaining ; it brings, also, before us the views of those who, while they do not hold the naked rationalistic theory, differ widely about the original form in which our religion appeared in the world, some alleging that the Church had, at the start, no organized form or constitution whatever, while others allow that it had a constitution, but that it was Presbyterian or Congregational. I must try, in the brief time at my command, to throw what light I can on all these perplexing queries. We ask, sweeping the wide horizon of our differences, What was the old Religion ? We think that is not hard to ascertain, if men will go to work the right way. There are a wrong way and a right way of investigating any subject ; and in this particular case one should begin with an honest resolve to take in all the evidence, without regard to popular theories or the current thoughts of the day. And here we enter a protest against appeal to the New Testament text without reference to exterior evidence as to its sense. The Christian religion is older than its documents ; it was not evolved from the New Testament ; the New Testament was an outgrowth of the Church. First in order came that Church "which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all."¹ She was existent, organized, equipped, and at her work before a line of the New Testament was penned ; the Gospels, Acts, and Epistles were written for men in full communion

¹ Eph. i. 22, 23.

with her, instructed in her faith, and familiar with her usages. These sacred documents should not be subjected to any private interpretation ; the attempt to try to decide questions in controversy by appeal to them alone, without note or comment, without reference to the *sensus communis* and living witness of the Church, is a reversal of the rational and historical order. The New Testament contains a part of the evidence, but not all ; it is neither a *Summa Theologica*, nor a Code of Canons, nor a Directorium of Worship. Other witnesses have the right to be heard when the question in debate is whether the Church is only a phase of man's religious consciousness, or whether it is an organic system ; and, if it be an organic system, whether the original organization was or was not of divine appointment ; and, if it was of divine appointment, what that divine appointment was.

On these questions we insist that the whole evidence ought to be heard, and that the court should rule out, first, personal tastes, preferences, and prejudices, and private opinions as to what ought or ought not to have been. The Church has a history : documents, some inspired and others not inspired." "Holy Scripture and Ancient Authors" ¹ demand, together, our attention, with liturgies, monuments, inscriptions, the writings of apologists, doctors, and catechists. The evidence is large and abundant. Remember this, that without the help of the Church

¹ Preface to the Ordinal.



you cannot be sure of your Bible. The question what Scriptures are canonical depends on no man's private opinion, but on external testimony; and if we have to fall back on that witness of the Church in order to discern between the true and the false Gospels, shall we refuse to hear her voice on other matters on which she is equally competent to testify? I repeat: it is easy for him who will to ascertain the facts. Take the question of Holy Order. Is there now a reasonable doubt as to the evidence to be derived from the writings of S. Ignatius, Tertullian, and S. Cyprian as to the antiquity of Episcopacy and the fact of the apostolic succession? What witness should be heard against the holy martyr Bishop of Antioch, contemporary of our Blessed Lord, friend and disciple of S. John? Take the question of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. Is there a reasonable doubt what the ancient liturgies mean?¹ Take the question of the Real Presence. Compare the views of Irenæus, Ignatius, Augustine, with those of Calvin and Zwingli, and what tyro is he who does not see the difference?² Or, again, who

¹ I refer the beginner, who desires information on this point, to *The Liturgies of SS. Mark, James, Clement, Chrysostom, and Basil*, and the *Church of Malabar*, by the Rev. J. M. Neale, D.D., and the Rev. R. F. Littledale, LL.D.

² Read *The Doctrine of the Real Presence*, as contained in the Fathers, from the Death of S. John the Evangelist to the Fourth General Council, by the Rev. E. B. Pusey, D.D.; also, by the same author, *The Doctrine of the Real*

that will but read the *De Sacerdotio* can fail to understand what S. Chrysostom (whose name is before us every time we open our Prayer Book) believed concerning the ministry as a priestly function? Go back from age to age, till you reach the first, and are come within twenty years of the date of the death of the last of the Apostolic College, and the Kingdom of God is the grand fact in history, a visible, organized body, governed by bishops, worshipping with liturgical and spiritually sacrificial forms, presenting to faith a living Christ, Emmanuel, and all the time in battle with the spirit of the world, and with those systems of philosophy which, from century to century, have set up as her rivals, and tried to do or undo her work.¹

Presence, as set forth in the Works of Divines and Others in the English Church since the Reformation.

¹ "But we may ask, What is primitive antiquity, and how is it to be limited? I reject the notion of a peculiar veneration for the first three centuries only. What are we to think of a theory which deprives us of the example of the Catholic Church at the very juncture when she displays her mission on a larger scale and under circumstances analogous to our own? Or which would, under the pretence of purity, deprive us of the four great Fathers of the Greek Church, Epiphanius, Basil, Nazianzen, and Chrysostom, and of the four Doctors of the Latin Church, Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, and Gregory? . . . For my part, I defer with reverence to the collective voice of the Ancient Church as expressed in its Councils, and the publicly approved writings of its theologians, the Fathers (as they are called). It is the only standard to which the Church of England (of which I



To this strong and, as it seems to us, unanswerable argument from history various replies are made, some by men who seem constitutionally incapable of admitting any evidence in questions about religion which in any way offends their preconceived idea, and some by persons of a less radical cast, many of whom are in general accord with us and need but little to come over to us altogether. It may be alleged that there was, originally, no organization of any kind, in Christianity : that it was left to men to settle for themselves, what shape if any, the Kingdom should take, with the right in reversion to alter it at any future day. Against this view lies, first, a presumption, which could not be stronger. That God, who is Lord and King over the heavenly hierarchies, with their thrones, dominations, principalities, and powers,¹ who was Governor of His people Israel, directing in every particular the manner of their national existence, who had announced the intended establishment of a grander and stronger Kingdom, should have left everything in confusion in that Kingdom, to take whatever

am a minister) seems to profess an adherence in her authorized formularies. And without pretending to rigid accuracy of limitation, I in general cite the writers within the period of the Four General Councils ; because (with the exception of S. Gregory the Great's writings) all the important documents of the Church coincide with that period."—An Introduction to the Study of Dogmatic Theology, by the Rev. Robert Owen, D.D., pp. 11, 12.

¹ Col. i. 16; Ephes. i. 21.

shape chance, or luck, or the taste and fancy of the primitive neophytes might determine: this is not only incredible, it is at variance with any reasonable conception of a Kingdom, and with the prophetic intimations of the object and results of its establishment. Nor yet does this theory accord with the acts of Christ, as when he gave the Keys of the Kingdom to Peter, and commissioned His apostles for their long work; nor with the glimpses, in the pastoral Epistles, of offices, orders, and grades, distributions of power and assignments of duty, nor with the distinct appearance of an Episcopate in Crete and Ephesus before the death of S. Paul. And, thirdly, the theory is contradicted by the uniform tenor of Church history, having no support in any writer of repute in ancient times, and being substantially contradicted by those who have given us an account of the origines of our religion. No better instance could be given of the German method of evolving ideas out of the inner consciousness than this amazing conception of an absolutely amorphous Apostolic Christianity. It amounts to a demonstration of the credulity of rationalism, as applied to ecclesiastical questions.

But there is another theory, much more respectable, which we must next consider. It constitutes the middle term between the rationalist's theory of evolution and the Churchman's belief in a primitive Episcopacy. To three propositions we are reduced, of which only one can be true :



That the Church had originally no organized form or constitution whatever.

That the Church was Episcopal in Government from the beginning.

That the Church was originally Congregational or Presbyterian, but that this primitive and simple type of government afterward degenerated into Episcopacy.

We have considered the first of these propositions ; let us take up the third and see what it involves.

It is assumed that the primitive Christians were Congregationalists or Presbyterians as to their form of Church government, and Calvinistic and Zwinglian in their doctrinal views. It is assumed that the system which we find in the writings of the ancient fathers, the liturgies, and the recorded acts of the Councils, was "a corrupt following" of the original Gospel as taught by our Lord and delivered to the Twelve. To this we make our reply as follows :

First, we object to the mode of proof. It rests entirely on the assumption that the New Testament must contain a perfect and complete picture of a system which was in existence many years before the sacred monographs were composed. It assumes that the New Testament must have been intended to present to posterity a full account of the order, discipline, and worship of the Kingdom ; else why this perpetual appeal to it with refusal to receive

any other testimony? And, evidence of the highest importance having been thus ruled out, the text is filled in with ideas in which men have been trained from their childhood, or to which, under the pressure of popular opinion, they incline. The method is arbitrary and constrained; it rests, primarily, on the judgment of the interpreter; it begs the questions at issue; it keeps us in the drift of variable thought; it settles nothing; for there never was a heresy or an error in the Church which men did not endeavor to defend by appeal to the Scriptures without note or comment. We are far from conceding that there is any considerable difficulty in proving from the New Testament alone that the original constitution of the Church was Episcopal; but we object to the method of proof, to whatever subject it may be applied, as essentially insufficient, irregular, and inconclusive. But the inherent wrongness of the method may best be seen when we proceed to consider the results which would follow if the position of our non-Episcopal brethren could be, in that manner, sustained.

For, first, it must follow that the Religion taught by God Incarnate, the sum of previous revelations, and the last that shall be made, the Gospel for which the men of the old world waited and by which the men of the new world live, that this Holy Religion, this pure and sincere gift to us in our deep distress, was, within fifty years after its establishment, marred, defaced, and practically subverted, by men who had

seen the Lord, and were companions and pupils of the Apostles, who died the martyr's death, and have left behind them names immortal for their virtues, their zeal, and their faith.

Secondly, it must follow that such men as Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp, Cyril of Jerusalem, Cyprian, and their contemporaries, brought in "another Gospel," and that their lives were devoted to the propagation of a mischievous development.

Thirdly, it follows that what converted the Roman Empire and worked a new life into the heart of the old world, was not real primitive Christianity, but a sham and fraudulent travesty thereof, a strange hybrid of sacramental, liturgical, and Episcopal errors, than which nothing could have been more foreign to the mind of the Apostles and of Christ.¹

Fourthly, it follows that, for some fifteen hundred years, Christianity did, as it were, vanish from the earth, not to reappear till the sixteenth century, when it was born again in Germany and Switzerland, with an ex-monk and a French layman for its midwives.

Fifthly, it follows, Christianity which thus shortly after its first appearance deteriorated into an unspiritual, superstitious, ecclesiastical formalism, did, on its reappearance in pristine purity, bring forth

¹ The argument is presented with great force and clearness by the Rev. Arthur Wilde Little, in his recently published work, *Reasons for Being a Churchman*. Milwaukee, Wis. 1885. (See chapters xi. and xii.)

within twenty years such fruit of lawlessness and riotous living, of dissensions and strifes, of pride and self-will, as terrified and confounded even the Reformers themselves, and led some to doubt greatly of what they had done.

And, finally, the present outcome of this pure, revised, restored Christianity is seen in a chaos of "denominations," a host of warring sects, which can neither teach nor govern, nor maintain the respect of mankind.

These appear to be the logical results of the only serious answer to our argument. In its method, and in its consequences, the scheme breaks down. Its postulate is that the private judgment is man's natural and infallible guide, and the test of truth. It assumes that the Church is the outcome of her own documents. It interprets those documents *without* reference to the witness of the Church as to *their* meaning. Precisely as the "higher criticism" deals with the text and sense of the Scriptures, so does this spirit deal with questions theological and ecclesiastical. It leads to conclusions of which, I think, I may say without objection, that they are most acceptable to the rationalist and the infidel. For if it be so, that our Holy Religion, as we call it, was all but strangled at its birth, and in its resuscitation has fallen to what we see, it would be hard indeed to tell what Christianity has done for the world. Identify it with Modern Evangelicalism, and scarcely can you trace through the last eighteen



centuries that feeble shadow, that bloodless and boneless shape, which never appears to have been able to assert its existence, and has proved unequal in nearly everything which men demand in a Religion.

Our position is this: that historic investigation only can determine what Christianity is; and that such investigation, honestly and intelligently conducted, will lead to the conclusion that Christianity was a dogmatic, sacramental, sacerdotal, and liturgical system from the first. Such a system is before us, as soon as we have the full material for the study of its character; and when we read the New Testament by the light of that Church in which and for which it was written, the system is seen there as plainly as in later and uninspired documents.

Now, as for readjustment. If you can possibly do so, readjust modern thought, modern ways, and modern society to that old system: but God forbid that we should try to adjust it to them. Let the thoughts of men be brought into subjection to the thought of God; let man submit to the Authority which demands his reverence. The world needs a new reformation; a reformation on the old lines; a return to principles, standards, and methods which were thrown away three hundred years ago. And if, in our own branch of the Church, the popular errors which lead, logically and actually, to skepticism, have foothold, then should she also come in for her share in the general purification; if aught in her standards obscure the light, let it be removed;



if aught hinders her reform on Catholic principles, let it be amended, rescinded, expunged. Such is the readjustment which these times require.

And now I ask what likelihood there is that such a readjustment can take place? The answer is fitly given in the derision with which the suggestion will be received by the liberal thinkers of the day, and even by many excellent persons in our own communion. Never mind: the true readjustment is certain to come at last; but not soon, nor now. And why not now? Because it must begin with an act of submission to authority, which cannot be expected at present. And if you ask why not, I will answer as briefly as possible, and so make an end for the evening.

Modern Society cannot be readjusted and brought into harmonious relations with the Ancient Faith, because Modern Society will not submit to the powers above. It is idle to hope for such submission, because Modern Society does not recognize, anywhere, a master whom it must obey. The whole community, I might say the whole world, England, France, Germany, Holland, America, has been gradually poisoned by a philosophy hostile to the principles of the Christian Religion and containing the reversal of Christian processes and habits of thought. For some two hundred years has that philosophy been taught, by divers masters and under divers names; it has permeated everything; it is become, as it were, an atmosphere; it is inhaled unconscious-

ly by man, woman, and child ; it affects men in all the relations of life ; it reaches them through history, fiction, poetry, art, journalism, science ; it is everywhere and in every thing ; one might say of it, that it darkeneth every man that cometh into this our modern world. Now this is the prime and most potent agent in the intellectual, moral, and religious life of the century ; it colors thought, directs study, and determines conclusions. This, really, is the spirit which, speaking through good men whom it possesses, asks a readjustment of Christianity to the very conditions which are the result of its silent working and subtle influence. What is this philosophy ? Let me explain.

We are taught by our old teachers that there are two distinct spheres, the Rational and the Super-Rational, with which we men have to do. All truths belong to one or the other of these orders. Truths of the Rational Order are within the sphere of reason ; and in dealing with them the reason is in her right, and adequate, and sufficient. But there is another order, which also contains its truths ; and these are above and beyond the reason. That which lies within the Rational Order may be discovered and proved by reason. But in the higher order that is impossible. Truths of that order can never become known to the reason by any investigation of its own ; and if, by any means, the reason should arrive at a knowledge of their existence, she can but receive them ; she cannot demonstrate them, in the strict



sense of that word. Powerless to discover, to prove, to explain one smallest thing in the Supernatural Order, the reason must wait for light to see, and when it sees, it must accept. But it is in that Supernatural Order, and not in the natural, that the secret of our life is hidden ; whence we came, what we are, why we are, whither we are going, the law of duty, the highest good, the solution of doubts, the answer to riddles, are there. Unless we know those mysteries we cannot live aright ; but we cannot know them without a revelation, and an acceptance of the revelation is an act of submission to the Power which reveals. The knowledge of supernatural truth comes not of investigation, experiment, argument, or search ; it is made known to man by the Incarnate Word of God ; it is preserved from loss in that Church which is His Body ; we have nothing to do but accept, believe, and walk in that light as He is in the light.¹

Now, the philosophy of the world is precisely the reverse of this. It takes its point of departure in universal doubt ; it makes the human reason the judge of everything ; it assumes that the reason, starting with the fact of self-consciousness, can demonstrate, step by step, everything that man needs to know. It is not atheistic ; it is not irreligious ; but it would have man depend on himself for his religion, his theology, his moral code, and whatever he needs over and above his material wants ; nor

¹ S. John xii. 35, 36. 1 John i. 7.

should he take anything on authority who is the supreme authority in himself. This philosophy has been lauded as the grandest of all discoveries, the most important agent in human progress. Men have drunk thereof to the full; they live of it now; as its disciples they reject the principle of authority in religion, and all that hangs thereon; and those who deny the grace of sacraments, the Christian priesthood, the Catholic system, the old theology, deny them on the principles instilled into them in this modern teaching. By degrees men are awakening to the consequences of their rejection of the principle of authority. The system which begins with a claim to discover and demonstrate by logic the truths of Natural Religion runs its course after its own law, year by year proving less and admitting less, till it ends in the schools of skepticism and agnosticism, where truth finds its grave. The reason, speaking to us through Des Cartes, announces that it is able to find out God without God's help. The same reason, speaking to us through Des Cartes' great-grandchildren, announces that it can find out nothing at all, and that there is nothing beyond this life which man need trouble himself about.

That seems to be the secret of the invalid condition of modern religious thought; the explanation of the doubt and uncertainty, the spiritual darkness, the moral confusion and intellectual glaucoma of the day. Philosophy, not God, is King. Men are very ill; they know not of what disease; we can tell

them. They are suffering from the effects of a slow poison; the whole system appears to be infected with the virus. And the only remedy is one which we cannot induce them to take. That philosophy which has formed modern thought, beginning with the assertion of the all-sufficiency and practical omnipotence of the reason, and ending in the denial of any sphere or order above the natural and rational; this must be renounced, even as we renounce the devil and all his works, the vanity of this world, the lust of the flesh. And then we must go back to the Christian science, which, preparing the heart for God's revelation, teaches that the reason is powerless to discover aught in that realm which lies beyond its sphere, and as powerless to demonstrate what has been disclosed; that in the sphere in which man's highest happiness, his largest interests, his hopes of salvation lie, God is all in all, and God only can reveal what he needs to know; that when God speaks, we men have nothing to do but listen and be still; that after He has spoken, we have but to order the life after His words; that man doth not live by bread alone, but by those words which proceed out of the mouth of God; that they have been spoken to us in these last days by His Son; and that He continues with us, a living present Saviour, in that large and luminous mystery, His kingdom, His Church.¹

¹ Let me call the reader's attention to a sermon by the Rev. William G. T. Shedd, D.D., Professor in the Union

"And now, Lord, what is our hope? Truly our hope is even in Thee." We have no hope of a speedy reform, greatly as it is needed. It has taken two hundred years and more to corrupt society; it may take longer than that to purge the iniquity and to cleanse it from its sin. Only by the heavy chastening hand of discipline can men be brought back to the love of the truth, and to the discernment of its relation to them in their life. Let that be the subject of our earnest prayers, that their eyes may be opened, that the truth recovered may make them free once more. A restoration of Christian theology and Christian philosophy to their rightful place; a reassertion of lost truth; a revision of the entire conception of truth among those who love

Theological Seminary, on the Obstacles and Rewards of Orthodoxy. A. D. F. Randolph & Co., New York.

"Pope Leo XIII., in his recent encyclical, perceives this truth and acts upon it. In reference to the defence of Christianity against the strenuous attack now being made upon it, he advises and urges his clergy to study Thomas Aquinas. No wiser advice has emanated from the Vatican for a long time. Protestant theologians of all denominations will agree cordially with the Roman Pontiff upon this point. No more powerful reasoning against atheism and materialism, no stronger defence of the principles of ethics and natural religion, can be found than that of the 'angelic' doctor. And in respect to the doctrines of revealed religion, the enunciation and support which they have obtained in the *Summa Theologica* make this treatise one of the bulwarks of the faith. What is distinctively Papal and Roman will not, of course, command the judgment of the Protestant; but this

and seek it ; a readjustment of views as to the function of the reason, the powers and responsibilities of private judgment, the limits to speculation ; these are what the world needs to-day. It is to be feared that men can be brought back to their senses only by some very painful and bitter road of sorrow. When those adversaries which have first wrought destruction in the Church, amid the plaudits of the infidel, proceed to assail with the very same methods and a pitiless logic the social order and every existing institution, then at last may men admit their mistake, and search once more with great desire for those old landmarks which the Fathers set, and for those principles on which depend alike our peace

constitutes only a fraction of the sum total. The strength and energy, the acumen and industry, the absorption and devoutness of a mind resembling and equal to that of Aristotle—who in the school of Plato got the name of the Intellect—all this fine flowering and fruitage of the rarest human intelligence was consecrated, life-long, in scholastic seclusion, and monastic abstinence, to the examination and defence of the essential elements of the Christian faith. The traveller from Rome to Naples sees from the railway, on the heights above Rocca Secca, the monastery where this ethereal spirit obtained some of his education, and did some of his work. The scene and the scenery are sympathetic and suggestive. The sharp line of the black mountain against the dazzling sky, with not a tree or a shrub to interfere between the earth and the infinite abyss of heaven, is emblematic of that keen and accurate vision that penetrates like a microscope, and that unyielding grasp that never lets anything slip."

and security in this world, and our everlasting happiness in the world to come.

But surely that would be a notable conversion : would God we might live to see it ! It would be like the coming of the glorious consummation, the dawn of the millennial age, the brightening of another day-spring from on high. Who shall behold such wonders ? What change must be wrought in these men about us, ere they can know the things that belong to their peace ?

I believe there are, this hour, among us, persons so infatuated by modern errors, and so wedded to the idols of their own hearts, that they would rather give up religion and relapse into total indifference and general scepticism than come humbly back to the old Catholic and Apostolic Faith. Whatever they may or may not admit, that system, at least, dogmatic, sacramental, mystic, cannot, and must not, and shall not be true ; they will have none of it ; they would rather be without God in this world than seek Him in a Sacrament, adore Him on an altar, or ask His absolution and blessing through a priest. That is the force against us ; the piled-up, ponderous, impregnable weight of prejudice wherein men have hardened their hearts all the life long. But there are signs that in another generation we may see a happier state of things. Many are softening ; they are willing to listen ; they are patient under criticism ; there are marks here and there of a disposition to surrender to Christ and the Church.



There is less talk of internal, and more of external, evidences ; there is much to cheer ; there will be more and more, if only some strong body will keep perpetually telling the truth, and holding up the light to them that long for it. Let me ask your prayers that the Lord will stand by and uphold those who represent in this generation the unchanging and unchangeable Gospel ; that He will not give them over into the hand of the enemy, but save them and give them grace and favor in the sight of all the people, and through them He will set up a standard against the downward drift of the spirit of this Time.



**The Question at Issue between the
Gospel and Philosophy.**



LECTURE VI.

THE QUESTION AT ISSUE BETWEEN THE GOSPEL AND PHILOSOPHY.

“Not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power : that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.”—
1 CORINTHIANS ii. 4, 5.

THIS evening I bring these Conferences to a close. In doing so I shall ask your careful attention to what appears to be the issue between the Mind of the Church and the spirit of this age. I do not hesitate to call it an issue of life or death. If it were possible for the gates of hell to prevail against the Church,¹ the credit of that horrible victory might properly be awarded, in the council-chamber of the nether realm, to those lying spirits² who had succeeded in persuading men to reject the revelation made to them by God their Saviour, and to take as a substitute for it the inventions and conclusions of their own thoughts. In dealing with this subject I shall go over once more some of the ground already traversed ; yet it may be better to do so, that the points may be more deeply fixed in your minds.

¹ S. Matt. xvi. 18.

² 1 Kings xxii. 22, 23.

I am sure that there are in this community, and through this whole country, thousands and tens of thousands of hearts in which the strongest motive is the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the desire that His redeeming and saving power might be made known to all men. The love of Christ constraineth his servants, in many denominations and under divers names. Now to such we would affectionately appeal and say, that we think that they ought, by rights, to be on the side of us who stand up for dogmatic and doctrinal Christianity, because, as I have said already, it is only by the use of dogmatic terms and doctrinal statements that the Jesus whom they love can be made known to the world as true and very Christ, the Redeemer and Saviour of men. They see at once the gross inconsistency of those persons who claim to know and reverence the Lord, while hesitating to admit His Eternal Power and Godhead; they ought to see this no less clearly, that it is impossible to confess that Eternal Power and Godhead, except in terms apt to express precisely what is meant. Christ, to be realized as Redeemer, Saviour, and Lord, must stand out so distinctly before us that we cannot ourselves doubt who it is, nor be at a loss for words to tell our brethren. But those words cannot be the obscure, labored, and unintelligible utterances of mysticism and metaphysics; they must be the terse and practical speech of the Creed. Now, that is dogma; for dogma is exact statement made by competent au-



thority. And be sure, ye that love the Lord Jesus Christ and are jealous of His honor, that the first condition to bringing men to Him is this, that His witnesses shall be able to tell out His Name, His Nature, His Work, and His Offices, in language which the unbeliever cannot pervert to the concealment of his scepticism, and which the humble souls, the wayfaring men, and even the children in the congregation, cannot misunderstand.

Furthermore, I would ask these lovers of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom also we love, whether they cannot recognize, in that strong dislike of positive dogmatic teaching, so characteristic of our day, which enfeebles the Church and checks the progress of our religion, a symptom of a malady of human nature? Comes it not of constant reference to self, of reliance on our mental processes, our inner experience, and our private judgment on religious themes? And do they not know that this mental condition has been wrought in so many of us by the assiduous and indefatigable teachers of a doctrine directly opposed to Christian philosophy and Christian theology? This brings me to the subject for this evening. I have spoken to you already of that insidious philosophy which, though professing respect for the Gospel, ends in leaving us not one of its vital truths. I wish to trace the working of that principle more fully than I have done hitherto, and to endeavor to make you see that we are not without cause for our complaint, that the ground of the rejection of the Church

System and Church Principles is substantially a sufficient ground for the rejection of Christianity itself.

To treat this subject scientifically is far from my intention. To consider the delusive and untenable arguments of the pantheistic school about God, as the absolute Idea or absolute Spirit, which in eternal self-movement proceeds from itself and becomes nature, and then again reverting to itself becomes a self-conscious spirit, or the immanence of God, or the impossibility of conceiving of the existence of a personal God, because personality implies finite relation; to take up for discussion any of these topics would be out of place here. My aim is to put before you, as plainly as possible, the simple, practical outcome of it, in hope to show the true and direct relation between this "lying spirit" and the popular temper on religious questions. Now the difference between philosophy and the Gospel is this, that the former considers religion to be a something evolved from man himself, while the latter brings it to him complete, from outside, and presents it for his acceptance or rejection. The familiar terms, objective and subjective, are perhaps the best we can use in saying what we have to say on this theme. That is objective to me which is outside of me; that is subjective which is within. The subjective is my own creation, through the active thought, the imagination, and the desires. The objective is not myself; it exists apart; it addresses me as one whom I meet as I walk along. A subjective Christ is a cre-



ation of my thought, a phantom in my spirit, such as my own notions and opinions may bring Him up from the well of my consciousness; and whatever homage I may render to this shadow is, in fact, rendered to myself. An objective Christ is one who comes to me from without, who accosts me on my journey, who tells me what and who He is, and claims my obedience and my love; and if I yield to the claim, I do so on my knees, renouncing my own wisdom and worth, and confessing that He is all and I am nothing. Now, philosophy says of religion that it is evolved from our own thoughts. But what the philosophers say about religion in general, other persons, who are not philosophers, and perhaps never heard the names of the philosophers, are all the while saying of religion in particular, and particularly whenever a direct issue is made between reliance on self and submission to external authority. If there be anything in the institutions, the symbols, the documents, or the offices of the Church which seems to irritate the spirit of independence, these good and well-meaning persons immediately take the opposition benches, and talk exactly like the philosophers; and philosophy has no more efficient implement in spreading its anti-Christian idea, no more helpfully in its war against the Gospel and the Saviour, than the man who dislikes doctrine and dogma, and dreams of a Christianity without divinely-ordained institutions, and without the right to impose a Creed on thinking and reasonable men.

The Gospel is, first of all, objective to us. It did not originate in man; it was not a development of his cogitations, nor an outcome of his religious aspirations. It represents, and realizes to us, things that were done by Almighty God first, before they were applied to us; things done for man, which he could not have done for himself; things exhibited to man, as medicine to the patient by his physician. And this principle runs through the Gospel system from beginning to end; it may be traced in every direction; in the Object of Worship, in the means taken to reconcile the world unto Himself; in the dictation of the sacred oracles; in the constitution of the Church; in the commission of the Ministry; in the presentation of the dogmas of religion; in the institution of the Sacraments; and especially in the Atonement on the Cross, which is the key to all mysteries and the centre of the hope of the world. Man is treated, under the Gospel, as the subject to be reached; he is sought out by the Lord; he is redeemed by a stupendous action in which he takes no part, save as an ensanguined and blinded looker-on; for him is organized a vast institutional System, with which he is invited to connect himself; once in that system he sees ever before him the symbols of a grace offered to his soul, and effectual signs of a power not his, to supplement his feebleness, and to repair, renew, and stablish him in a supernatural life. All this is outside; the benefits and effects are to be wrought within; but there shall be no mistak-



ing the moral, the hidden meaning of the system. He has the choice, to accept or to reject. If he reject, it is, actually, to turn away from God ; and the man who turns from God can turn nowhither excepting back into himself ; and that is loss eternal. "He shall turn again to his earth, and then all his thoughts perish." From first to last the choice for us is between the Objective and the Subjective, between the King, to Whom all live who believe in Him, and Self, which cannot do for anyone what has been done and can be done by God alone. The Gospel gives the objective, Philosophy the subjective. The latter shall perish in the using, since it is the work of man ; the former shall never fail, for it is the Word of our God, which endureth forever.

To illustrate and apply what I am saying, let me begin with the doctrine of the Atonement, as that which most tenderly and pathetically touches the hearts of men. The Gospel teaching on that point is objective first, and subjective afterward. We are told that the Death of Christ accomplished something for us men, before it was made known to us as an object of faith, that it did something even for those who never heard of Christ, and never in this world should learn His name. He offered a sacrifice for sin first. With that men had nothing to do ; it was what neither man nor angel could have done. That comes first : the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ ; an action done before the whole Universe,

and for the benefit of all mankind, in the open air, under God's heaven, and in the view of mortals, devils, and angels. When that act had been accomplished, men were told the mystery, and they were bidden to draw near and look upon the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sin of the world. The subjective impression made on the heart is an after thing, a sequel; it follows on faith in that outside and completed work.

Now, see how philosophy deals with that vital truth. I say philosophy, for I would rather charge the error upon it than upon persons who love the Lord Jesus Christ; if among such there be those who find that they think the same way, let them settle it between philosophy and themselves, and judge how much in them is to be credited to philosophy and how much to religion. Look, then, how philosophy deals with that vital truth, how it takes hold of it and perverts it; mark exactly what it does. It cancels all that is objective. It denies the fact that an atonement, a satisfaction, was made. It may very easily laud the power of the Cross, as it would commend the calmness of Socrates, or the unselfishness of Regulus; but, according to philosophy, the only power of the Cross is to work on human feelings, and so to influence life and character. Christ in His death had no object, so far as we are concerned, but to awaken our admiration, pity, and sympathy, and so draw our hearts to His; and the Cross is not to be regarded as an altar, on which a



sacrifice of reparation and satisfaction is made to the Father Eternal, but rather a beautiful and divine poem of humility, unselfishness, love, and devotion to men. The objective side of the Atonement vanishes; the subjective remains and nothing else. And if this one-sided philosophic notion could gain universal credence, as undoubtedly it would if not incessantly checked by the powerful dogmatic teaching of the Holy Catholic Church, the result would be that Christ the Redeemer would be lost; no longer would remain the sense of the "exceeding sinfulness of sin," nor meaning in the words,

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy side, a healing flood,
Be of sin the double cure,
SAVE FROM WRATH, and make me pure."

The Christ then left to us would be no more than a kind and lovely man, the sort of person to be very popular in cultured rationalistic circles, over whom philanthropists might gush, and from whom all that is mysterious and superstitious would have been quite purged out and taken away.

On this first point I hope we are in accord; I wish we could agree as well all through: but whether it be so or not, I think the principle is as clear in each other instance which I shall cite as in this. For our second illustration, then, take the Church. As described in Holy Scripture, it is an organization, an

institution, a Kingdom, founded on a rock, having a door with keys, and persons in charge of those keys, and having a promise of perpetuity. The Church of the Old and New Testaments, and of history, is a visible state, with Ministry, ordinances, and laws. This is certainly its objective presentation. It is not men who found and make the Church; it is Christ who founds the Church and calls men into it; who, there, teaches them their lessons, sets them their tasks, and binds them by canonical and ecclesiastical regulations. The Church is outside of us and of our life; it receives us into itself; it proposes to limit our thoughts by its dogmatic teaching, and to guide our feet through this world by its precepts; it is a mighty Community, holding angels and living saints and dead together; and, as matter of fact, the greater part of it, now after almost two thousand years, is in that other world beyond the river, which our feet in time must cross. That is the Gospel presentation of the Church, strictly objective, to begin with. But now, again, mark what philosophy does. It rejects this objective idea of the Church, and insists on a subjective view. There are degrees in its departure from the truth. There are philosophical religionists, and they are many in number, who deny to the Church the note of visibility; it is, say they, an invisible Church, it consists of truly converted and holy souls, scattered all through the different religious denominations, and known only to God. There are others who say that the Church was originally a

mere aggregation of religious enthusiasts, a kind of sacred and inspired mob of persons under conviction ; that they stood together at first lovingly, but loosely, without distinction or difference, without organization, without commissioned leaders, without a government, in short, that they were a band of enthusiastic communists : and further, it is alleged that the first move toward organization came about through the work of distributing alms, that the almoners expanded into ecclesiastical officers, and that by natural development there came into being the Church of a later age, with its hierarchy, its rites, and its councils. Next come others, more bold, who say that the Church is neither visible, nor organized, nor an aggregation of souls known or unknown, seen or unseen, but that the word " Church " is merely another expression for the religious state of the human mind in general, the continuous thought of Christian men from age to age. Such a come-down as this is something of which the Dominie in the romance might well have said, " Prodigious ! " and yet, is it not the inevitable outcome of rejecting the objective side of the revelation on that point ?

Or, take the Ministry. Such writers as S. Paul and S. Chrysostom, following the teaching as it came to them direct or by tradition ; such authors as they who composed the Ordinal in the Book of Common Prayer, proceed in the full assurance of the fact that the essence of the Ministry consists in a call from God, and " that no man taketh that



honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.”¹ Now, Aaron certainly had an objective call, and an external investiture and commission. “As was Aaron,” then, so is the man who now ministers in the Church; not self-made, but sent. The Ministry has been conferred from age to age by Apostolic Succession: it can be had in no other way. The Christian Priesthood, commissioned by the Lord, or those to whom he has delegated the power of ordination, stand before the people with gifts which the people did not confer; they are stewards of the mysteries of Christ, they are entrusted with divine things; the people may hear or forbear as they like: the Priesthood is God’s Institution, whatever the people may think or do. This is the objective side as to the doctrine of the Holy Ministry. But here, as always, philosophy plays us its old tricks: First, it denies the teaching of the Church concerning Episcopacy and the Apostolic Succession, so opening the door to all ministries; and then it goes further, and claims that no call whatever is needed, that anyone who chooses is free to style himself a minister, and that the test of the call is within, and not without; it is simply a subjective thing; there is no need to possess and show a commission, duly sealed, signed, and attested; it suffices that one is likely to be successful in the work which he is expected to do who writes “Reverend” before his name.

¹ Hebrews v. 4.

I take another illustration in the doctrine of the Sacraments. The statements have been made before ; but they will bear repetition. We understand them to be signs effectual, signifying divine forces, and conferring what they signify. That is the objective view. Baptism is "the laver of regeneration ;" God meets man there, and does something for him which he cannot do for himself. It is an outward gift—that is to say, a gift coming from outside the periphery of terrestrial things ; technically we call it sacramental. But the philosophic religionist says, No. Baptism is a sign and nothing more. Instrumentally it effects nothing. Regeneration and conversion are the same thing ; and these are effected subjectively in the soul, without intervention of man or rite ; and baptism is a kind of notification, either of the hope that the child baptized will at some future time become regenerate, or of the belief that the person baptized has already been regenerated ; but baptism in itself can do nothing for us, being either a sign to lookers-on, or a seal to the individual receiving it. What wonder that under this purely subjective teaching adult baptism should have been neglected, and infant baptism abandoned ? What wonder that, although, as is well known, our Lord declared, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God,"¹ we should hear the insolent paraphrase of an apostle's words,

¹ S. John iii. 5.

"Baptism is nothing, and the want of baptism is nothing, but the keeping the commandments of God!"¹

When we come to the Holy Communion the same mischievous work is conspicuous. For the Church teaches us that the Holy Sacrament of the Altar is, in itself, complete. Christ is spiritually present, by the words of institution and the power of the Holy Ghost; and man draws near to that awful mystery, to receive, if duly prepared, "the strengthening and refreshing of the soul;" or, if unworthy, "to eat and to drink unto himself damnation," as one who profaneth the most sacred thing of the Kingdom.

" *Tantum ergo sacramentum
Veneremur cernui,
Et antiquum testamentum
Cedat novo ritui;
Fides præstat supplementum
Sensuum defectui.*"

But here it is that philosophy fairly riots in expedients to get rid of the objective side of this mystery, and to limit our belief to the subjective. It denies, flatly and always, the Real, Objective Presence of the Lord in that Holy Mystery; it invents the theory of the Virtual Presence, of the Representative Presence, of the Symbolical Presence; it

¹ I have heard with my own ears this blasphemous parody of 1 Cor. vii. 19.

descends, at last, to the Memorial theory ; and it insists that the only value in the "Communion" is its effect on the mind or heart, and that the only Presence of Christ is in the human heart.

I think this series of illustrations could be carried on until it had taken every particular in the system of Christianity. Where a false principle has been injected at the source, it corrupts, of necessity, every stream that issues from that head. From the doctrine of the Atonement to that of the Ministry, from the doctrine of the Ministry to that of the Sacraments, and thence, on and on in everything, the error may be traced ; and its essence is the sacrifice of the Objective to the Subjective in every religious conception. And when you comprehend this, you will understand precisely what has been done by the rationalistic philosophy to which I am now referring, and may agree with us who lay at its door the popular dislike of dogmatic instruction, the incredulity of many on the subject of miracles, the rejection of the supernatural, the over-estimate of preaching and the under-estimate of worship, the reliance on sensations, the acceptableness of any novelty, the disgust for severe discipline, the idolatry of what are called broad and liberal teachers, in a word, the entire outcome of the concentration of thought on self.

Now, what you should well understand is this, that there are two systems before you ; and that to hold either efficiently you must hold it thoroughly ;



and that if you do not hold to the one so intelligently and so lovingly as to keep yourself from coquetting with the other, you will end in losing the one to which you are untrue. If you take the philosophical theory of subjectivism in any of its parts, you risk being drawn into it as a whole ; touch the outer edge of the Maelstrom and the terrible pull toward the centre begins. It may seem a light thing to some one to deny the Real Presence, and regeneration in Baptism, and the Apostolic Succession ; but the grounds on which these are rejected will be found to be in kind the very same on which the Sacrifice on the Cross is denied by the Unitarian, and the whole system of Christianity rejected by the free-thinker. The process is one ; it is that of measuring the dogmatic teaching of the Catholic Church by one's private rule and standard, and applying to God's mysteries the moral and intellectual habits of the time. The Rule of Faith is Holy Scripture, as interpreted by common Catholic consent ; substitute for that the speculative wisdom of your learned men, or the sentiment of the age, or any other test that may be named, as likely to be acceptable to this generation, and for you the entire system of Christianity is in peril. You may begin with some pre-ludes, which it might be easy to overlook and excuse ; but there is nothing except the grace and mercy of God that can save you from going on to a denial of the Church which is His Body, and of that atoning sacrifice once offered by Him, in His utter

and absolute solitude, when as our High Priest, unaided and alone, He took away the sin of the world.

I give no name to that philosophy of which I have been speaking ; I care not what title, ancient or modern, it may bear, whether it be commended to us with the autograph of a Hegel or a Schleiermacher, or any other man. What I say is this : that it is man's device and invention, that it is another gospel, and that our duty is to sound the note of warning against it. Nor can it hold its ground : fail it must, and fail it ought to ; for it cuts the ground from under our feet, it gives us nothing better to feed on than the varying opinions of a learned few, clever and cultured, no doubt, but independent in speculation and restive under any restraint ; and when it tries to speak, its language is so strange, so affected, so incomprehensible, that no simple-minded man could possibly get at what it means. We need an education in the vocabulary of metaphysics to fathom the statements of these teachers ; and for one, I had rather be trained in the simple old-fashioned speech of the Bible and the Prayer Book ; I know what that means, I can understand it ; it is what I want, to walk by in this perplexing life, to hold to in the dying hour. I find it not in the philosophic jargon of the School which boasts so loudly all the day, but in Him who stands outside of me, to whom I look up out of the deep of this sinful world, and out of my own darkness, from whom alone I have light,

as "seeing Him who is invisible,"¹ as feeling certain that "I know whom I have believed."²

And let me add one thing more. There is, thank God, a widespread desire for unity among Christians. It is growing stronger day by day. It is no surprise to those who are aware that now for many, many years the members of a great organization extending throughout the Christian world have been praying every day, in the self-same words, that our Lord will grant to His Church that peace and unity which are according to His will. This is one of the most hopeful signs of the time; the clear dawning of the day when the flocks shall be gathered together³ in one fold, under one shepherd, and at evening time there shall be light.⁴ But, in the name of whatever is reasonable and right, let us make no blunder here, lest the work come to naught for the present, and the hope be still longer deferred. No union would be real but a union on principle and in truth; on the principles of the Gospel, and in the truth of the Catholic Religion. Other unions have been tried: they are but mockeries of union; when men come together, by way of surrender of the truth, their unions will not endure; the cord is but a rope of sand. No union can be real, none permanent, but one formed on the firm platform of dogmatic truth. Philosophy can but mock us with the promise; it cannot bring aught to fulfilment. Phi-

¹ Hebrews xi. 27.

² Genesis xxix. 8.

³ Tim. i. 12.

⁴ Zech. xiv. 7.

losophy means adjustment, adaptation, change ; it is of man, not of God. The "liberal," as he calls himself, will only end in throwing things into greater confusion ; the broad-churchman, breaking down the dykes, will end in bringing in the flood of waters, washing every standing thing away. There can be no Millennium till there be a reunion of Christendom ; and there can be no true, healthful, and permanent reunion of Christendom till men "all speak the same thing, and till there be no division among them, and till they be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." How, I ask, is that possible, except on the basis of a Faith, a Creed, and an organized Church ?

What the nation wants is a common faith and a common rule of morals. That Church will rule the religious part of the nation which tells it most plainly what to believe, what to do, and how to live. We have had eminent apostles of liberalism among us : they have proved failures ; their lecture-rooms are closed, their audiences are dispersed. We have philosophico-religionists among us now who, obviously, prefer modern German literature to the old Catholic theology ; their work also will fail, and their short-lived honor will die away.¹ Our Church

¹ The recent appearance of a form of Hegelianism in our Church may be regarded rather as a curious phenomenon than as a matter of serious moment. The Hegelian doctrine of the immanence of God in the world and the human soul, according to which the relation of the divine and human

is attracting more and more attention day by day. She has remarkable advantages for the work of presenting to people who still love simplicity and sincerity a definite view of our Holy Redeemer and a practical application of the doctrines of grace. But O! the greatness of this responsibility! and O! the sin, the crime, of corrupting the Evangelical doctrines with the rudiments of the world! If we should fail; if we should repeat the miserable history of the German rationalists, the Tübingen school, the English Agnosticism, if we dally, and lose time, and throw

spirit is conceived as essential unity and not as personal distinction and intercourse, leads on to the position of Baur and the Tübingen school, who reject the supernatural and miraculous in the Scriptures and the Church, and leave no place in history or religion for a Personal God. The total rejection of Christianity, as we have received it by tradition from our fathers, is an easy thing for one who has swallowed the Hegelian philosophy. We deem it impossible that those errors should obtain a permanent footing among us, in view of the insurmountable obstacles to their propagation by the dogmatic, sacramental, and liturgical defences in our Church system; these it should be our constant aim to strengthen and defend. There are weeds which flourish only where the ground is poor; and as everyone knows who has tried to make a handsome lawn, the sure way is to keep enriching the soil. Good grass-seed and plenty of it saves the trouble of pulling up the sprawling plantain and the pert white daisy. So with the Church; the soil is too full of the germs of truth, the sod too firm, to give much encouragement to unwholesome vegetation; the fittest will survive; and the fittest is decidedly *not* German metaphysics.

away the truth in the attempt to dress it up to the taste of vitiated appetites and diseased palates, there are, there must be, those in this land who shall still speak God's unchanging truth and declare the unalterable principles of the Catholic system when our stammering lips are dumb. The Church of the future will not be a school of philosophy, nor an audience-room for oratory, nor a museum of science, nor an assembly of self-satisfied rationalists, but an organized Kingdom in which shall be the Presence of the Sovereign, the riches of the treasure-house of grace, and the jewels of the crown. KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS, blessed be Thy Kingdom, which is an everlasting Kingdom, and Thy Dominion which endureth from generation to generation !



Supplement.—University Sermon.
The Full Assurance of Faith.

NOTICE.

THE following sermon was preached in S. Augustine's Chapel, Sewanee, Tenn., at the Annual Commencement of the University of the South, on Sunday, August 2, 1885. It is annexed, as a supplement, with the intention of throwing light on some of the statements in Lectures II. and V., and of showing their practical application in the order of our salvation.



SERMON.

THE FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH.

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having an High Priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering.”—HEBREWS X. 19-23.

THE kind invitation which brings me here to-day is one of those which inevitably embarrass the recipient. No audience could more fully awaken the sense of responsibility than the one before me; and yet the time is too short to do justice to any great theme on which one might desire to speak for spiritual counsel or systematic instruction. What more can the preacher do, than to say some words which, haply, may be as seed sown for a reaping in after years?

I come to this beautiful place from very different scenes, and am refreshed in the atmosphere of intellectual culture and evangelical religion. Many of you are soon to bid these hills and valleys a long

farewell and go out into a turbulent and noisy world which lieth in wickedness. Tempters are there; the highways are dangerous. You will need a good conscience, a strong heart, and a ready mind to do such things as are right. These come of the grace of God; and that is a gift to faith: for "by grace ye are saved through faith."¹ Now, among the enemies who wait for you outside, those are most to be dreaded who rob men of their faith. Many a youth, on passing from a home like this, and drifting into the vortex of the secular order, has repeated the story of the parable, in falling among thieves, who have stripped him of his raiment of religion, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.² Fain would I speak words which may fortify you against the perils of that way.

I have taken a long text, full of Christian doctrine, not to expound it, but simply for the sake of three or four words there: "*boldness*"—"full assurance of faith." Mysteries are here, crowded together. "The Holiest;" that is, the unseen world. "The blood of Jesus;" that is, Atonement for sin. "The veil, His Flesh," the Incarnation; "an High Priest," the sacerdotal function; "the House of God," the visible Church; "washing with pure water," the "one baptism for the remission of sins." Here, indeed, be mysteries, deep and dense. Yet in the midst of them the writer walks, not dubious and perplexed, but with "*boldness*" and in "*full assur-*

¹ Ephes. ii. 8.

² S. Luke x. 30.



ance of faith." I bid you hail with joy his cheerful words. They bespeak a state of mind, a habit of soul which are the safeguard of morality and the guarantee of inner peace. And they suggest a comparison with another habit of soul, another cast of thought, which, in this age of cross-purposes and conflicting counsels, we ought to study, just as, in the medical colleges, they investigate the causes and symptoms of bodily and mental disease.

Among the things with which man has to do, there are some which lie beyond his reach ; he cannot see them, nor can he subject them to scientific tests. We speak of them, generally, as the truths of Revelation. The attitude of the mind toward them must take the form, either of a question, or of a conclusion, or of a positive assertion. And according to the form which thought so takes, we come to Scepticism, or Rationalism, or Catholic Faith.

For instance, as to the "life of the world to come." The sceptic asks a question : "Is there a future life ?" The rationalist arrives at a conclusion : "I infer, on such and such grounds, that there must be a future life." The Christian believer says, "There *is* a future life." Or, take another illustration. The sceptic asks, "Is God love ?" for he finds much in the process of the natural world to the contrary. The rationalist says, "I think, having weighed the *pros* and *cons*, that God is love." The Christian says, "I know that God is love." How comes it that any man can pass out of the lines of questioning and de-

bating, and affirm boldly, "God is love, and He has given to me an immortal soul?" Such assertions express "full assurance." But assurance on such points can only come by faith.

For, of course, there is no assurance where there is doubt; doubt is the opposite pole, nor does a man feel sure while asking questions. Nor yet can assurance, full and final, be the outcome of the process of drawing conclusions from premises in the logical method; because no man can be perfectly sure of his process, and still less can he be sure that he may not hear, or learn, or discover something by and by which may compel him to revise his argument and change his views. Neither in a society of sceptics, nor yet in a society of rationalists, can there be "assurance." To gain it, a man must have left off asking questions; he must have found some other basis than that provided by logic and speculation; he must have got a foothold on some shore where all things are calm and unshaken, and where he is independent of the variations incessantly exhibited in the "vain" thoughts of men.¹

Now, first, it may be asked, whether such assurance is to be had? I answer, yes; it has been enjoyed, it is now enjoyed; it is the special gift of the Gospel, the sign of the children of the Kingdom. That is a weak and tepid dilution of Christianity which does *not* give assurance; and when you hear Christian teachers or Christian bodies speak with

¹ Psalm xciv. 11.



hesitation, and as under correction from the schools of the world, know that they must have become tinctured by rationalism and weakened by "science falsely so called."¹ The Gospel came to us in an age of doubt, perplexity, and dissolving faiths. The marked distinction between the men enlightened by the Gospel and those of the philosophical schools was that the former knew what they believed, while the latter drifted helplessly through the chaos of their queries and the dimness of their conclusions. The First Age was one of living and burning faith; the proof is on every page of the New Testament. "With great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the dead,"² a thing which the infidel derides, and at which the gorge of the rationalist rises in the effort to swallow it. "Our word toward you was not yea and nay. For all the promises of God are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."³ "I know whom I have believed."⁴ Why multiply these quotations? Let us challenge the production of any evidence against our claim, that from the highest teacher of the Church down to the humblest child in the kingdom, they spoke so boldly, and with such magnificent confidence, that worldly men, like Felix, thought them beside themselves. Assurance was once enjoyed; to say that we cannot have it now, that the minister of Christ may not now speak with authority, that the

¹ 1 Tim. vi. 20.

² 2 Cor. i. 18-20.

³ Acts iv. 33.

⁴ 2 Tim. i. 12.



disciple may not feel himself immovably strong in his religion, is substantially to insinuate that some change has come over the world, under which the power of the Gospel has passed away.

Reflect a moment on the Gospel; on what it proposed to effect, and did effect. Its object is the sanctification of men—to make them clean, pure, and true, sober, just, and temperate; to transform them from glory to glory into the image of God. This aim is pursued, not by moral suasion, nor by fine talks about ethics, but by the exhibition of certain facts which it proposes to faith, and by the disclosure of a body of truth which it required men to receive simply on this ground, that God hath spoken. That truth was not the acquisition of the philosophers and the wise of this world; nor was it held in monopoly by any critical or scientific clique; not yet had any such class the right to look after it, as if it were particularly in their charge, and as if man's continued acceptance of it must depend on the way in which it might endure the handling of its patrons from time to time. There could have been no assurance, no certainty, in a scheme emanating from the human brain, or subject to revision and correction by human wit or wisdom. The Gospel was for all people, nations, and languages; it knew no difference, and made no distinction, between Jew or Greek, bond or free, rich or poor, young or old, learned or ignorant. What it offered was offered to every intelligent being alike, and to



all in the same way and on the same conditions. Particularly we know, from the record, that it came first, in the fulness of light, knowledge, and grace, not to the "wise and prudent," not to the "mighty and noble,"¹ but to "babes," to the simple and the weak, to those whom the great of this world despised; and that it was never more effective to all its purposes than to those who were not of the student class, and knew nothing of logic, disputation, scientific methods, or the learning of their time; nay, what shut men out of that system, and kept them out of it, was intellectual pride and the self-sufficiency of irreligious culture. As a fact, the Gospel was no discovery or invention of pedagogues and professors; nor could a system with such persons for its apostles have become a religion for mankind.

For let us suppose that speculative knowledge, critical investigation, and long study had been required as conditions to the knowledge of the Truth; three inconveniences would have resulted, overthrowing the system from the very starting-point.²

¹ 1 Cor. i. 26.

² "Sequerentur tamen tria inconvenientia si hujus veritas solummodo rationi inquirenda relinqueretur.

"Unum est, quod paucis hominibus Dei cognitio inesset. A fructu enim studiosæ inquisitionis, qui est veritatis inventio, plurimi impediuntur tribus de causis.

"Quidam siquidem impediuntur, propter complexionis indispositionem, ex qua multi naturaliter sunt indispositi ad sciendum. Unde nullo studio ad hoc pertingere possent, ut

First, the knowledge of God and of his grace would have been limited to a very few individuals.

Secondly, they who possessed it would have attained it only after a very long time, and toward the close of life.

Thirdly, even in their case it would have been blended with many errors, the result of human imperfection.

summum gradum humanæ cognitionis attingerent, qui in cognoscendo Deum consistit.

“Quidam vero impediuntur necessitate rei familiaris. Oportet enim esse, inter homines, aliquos qui temporalibus administrandis insistant, qui tantum tempus in otio contemplativæ inquisitionis non possent expendere, ut ad summum fastigium humanæ inquisitionis pertingerent, scilicet Dei cognitionem.

“Quidam autem impediuntur pigritia. Ad cognitionem enim eorum quæ de Deo ratio investigare potest, multa præcognoscere oportet, quum fere totius philosophiæ consideratio ad Dei cognitionem ordinetur. Propter quod metaphysica, quæ circa divina versatur, inter philosophiæ partes ultima remanet addiscenda.

“Sic ergo non nisi cum magno labore studii ad prædictæ veritatis inquisitionem perveniri potest; quemquidem laborem pauci subire volunt pro amore scientiæ, cujus tamen mentibus hominum naturalem Deus inseruit appetitum.

“Secundum inconveniens est, quod illi qui ad prædictæ veritatis cognitionem vel inventionem pervenerint, vix post longum tempus pertingerent, tum propter hujusmodi veritatis profunditatem, ad quam capiendam per viam rationis non nisi post longum exercitium intellectus humanus idoneus invenitur; tum etiam propter multa quæ præexiguntur, ut dictum est; tum propter hoc quod tempore juventutis dum

First, the knowledge of the truth, if it depended on the investigation of the learned, would have been limited to a very few of our race. For men in general must always be prevented from acquiring knowl-

diversis motibus passionum anima fluctuat, non est apta ad tam altæ veritatis cognitionem, sed in quiescendo fit prudens et sciens ut dicitur in septimo Physicorum. (c. 3). Remaneret igitur humanum genus, si sola rationis via ad Deum cognoscendum pateret, in maximis ignorantiae tenebris; quum Dei cognitio, quæ homines maxime perfectos et bonos facit non nisi quibusdam paucis, et his paucis etiam post temporis longitudinem, proveniret.

“Tertium inconveniens est, quod investigationi rationis humanæ plerumque falsitas admiscetur, propter debilitatem intellectus nostri in judicando et phantasmatum permixtionem. Et ideo apud multos in dubitatione remanerent ea, quæ sunt verissime etiam demonstrata, dum vim demonstrationis ignorant, et præcipue quum videant a diversis, qui sapientes dicuntur, diversa doceri. Inter multa etiam vera, quæ demonstrantur, immiscetur aliquando aliquid falsum, quod non demonstratur, sed aliqua probabili vel sophistica ratione asseritur, quæ interdum demonstratio reputatur. Et ideo oportuit, per viam fidei, fixa certitudine, ipsam veritatem de rebus divinis hominibus exhiberi.

“Salubriter ergo divina providit clementia, ut ea etiam quæ ratio investigare potest fide tenenda præciperet, ut sic omnes de facili possent divinæ cognitionis participes esse, et absque dubitatione et errore.

“Hinc est quod dicitur : *Jam non ambuletis sicut et gentes ambulant, in vanitate sensus sui, tenebris obscuratum habentes intellectum* (Ephes. iv. 17, 18). Et : *Ponam universos filios tuos doctos a Domino* (Isai. liv. 13).”—ST. THOMAS : Summa contra Gentiles, Book I., chap. v.

edge in that slow and laborious way by these three causes :

(a) The greater number have no natural ability for scientific study ; so that the ignorant and unlearned would have been excluded.

(b) A still greater number are hindered from such study by the cares of life, and the necessity of incessant labor to maintain themselves and those dependent on them ; so that the laboring classes, the toilers by land and sea, the administrators of trusts for others, and all who lack time and leisure for reading, investigation, and thought, would have been excluded.

(c) The dread of the painfulness and fatigue of such study would have deterred from it, even where circumstances were somewhat favorable to the pursuit of the truth in that way.

So that they who had the ability, the time, and the perseverance to discover religious truth by the path of the student and the scholar would have constituted an infinitesimally small proportion of mankind.

But, secondly, of these, they only who had survived many years would have come to the knowledge of it at last. For art is long and time is short ; and the study of such profound mysteries as those of religion would demand at least as much time as the study of natural science, in pursuing which men grow old, gray, and thin, or die, perchance, before attaining the desired success.

And, thirdly, even these favored few, unless divinely protected from the results of human infirmity, would not, after all, have attained to perfect knowledge. In every investigation allowance must be made for error; there are corrections for every observation. Who could be absolutely sure that his rational process was exactly correct? His successors might possibly discover errors which he had overlooked; the religious knowledge of one era, or what passed current for such, might be superseded by new philosophical methods, by some later psychology, or by the scientific discoveries of a succeeding age.

Thus, if it had been so ordered that the knowledge of the truth was to come only by dint of investigation and study, and not by revelation, and that we were to be indebted to "the wise and prudent" for it, and must look to them for light, and hold our faith subject to their favorable censure, one cannot see how, in all the world, there could have been "assurance" in the possession of truth, or "boldness" in its assertion. The weak, the ignorant, the toilers, and the poor must have remained in darkness. A select few, aristocrats of learning, Brahmins of science and philosophy, might have seemed to know something about religion; yet even these would have been in doubt themselves, and the cause of doubt to others; while the earth would have been covered with darkness, through which a few lights might have been seen, flaring

with unsteady flame, and so dim that a mere puff of wind might extinguish them forever.

The process of Rationalism and the spirit of the Gospel are essentially antagonistic ; nor could the former have done for men what the latter did accomplish ; and the notion that the knowledge of religious truth is the result of the independent exercise of our natural powers and mental acumen is destructive of the possibility of certainty in matters of more concern to us than life itself.

What, then, is that Truth to which men cannot attain by the mere exercise of the natural powers, which is above human correction and human criticism, which was and is still made known to Jew and Greek, to full-grown man and little child, to the learned and the unlearned, in the same way and on the same conditions ? It is not a truth of the Natural order ; it belongs to the Supernatural realm. The key which unlocks the secrets of the Natural order is the active intellect of man. The deeper mysteries of the Supernatural order are made known to that same intellect, submissive to One who speaks from an inaccessible and undiscoverable sphere. All men have not the intellectual power to explore the mystery of the visible world. But all men have ears, and all can hear, and all can exercise faith ; and therefore is it that the Gospel presents the truth to all of us alike, because we have, whatever our rank or powers, only this to do ; to listen, to take in, and to believe.



Now this is no tax on any reasonable man, nor is any man humiliated in thus accepting the Truth. In fact, there is nothing so reasonable, so logical, so simple, as this demand on us for submission in faith.

For all truths with which we have to do belong to one of two orders, the rational or the superrational ; to use more familiar terms, the natural or the supernatural.

Truths of the rational order are within the sphere of the reason ; truths of the superrational order are above and beyond it—they do not contradict it, they merely surpass.

Truths of the rational order may be first discovered, and then proved, by the reason alone, in its natural use, without supernatural aid. Truths of the superrational order can never become known to the reason by original investigation, nor can it demonstrate them, as in the case of things within its own sphere, even though by some extraordinary means it should arrive at a knowledge of their existence. The reason must simply accept them in deference to some propounding authority external to itself. Nor is it disparaging to the reason to state that it is thus limited in its range. There is no shame in not doing what it is not possible to do ; it is no disgrace to a man that he cannot walk on the water or fly about in the air ; nor do they cast a slur on the human reason, who affirm that it cannot, by searching, find out God.

To attain even to a limited knowledge of the truths of the superrational order, which is all that man can have in his present state, a revelation of them is indispensably necessary; a disclosure, a manifestation of them from the side on which they come upon us.

That in man which accepts them is Faith. Now, it is a cardinal principle of the Gospel, that "faith cometh by hearing;"¹ not by study, not by investigation, not by inner revolving; but simply "by hearing;" by listening to the Revealing Agent, whatever that agent be, and acquiescing without question or demur. This implies a submission. It is what the Scriptures call "the obedience of faith."² I find nothing in this but what is simple and easy to take in. The human intelligence learns from a higher Intelligence, with which it is naturally in correspondence, that there is a certain body of truth, of which it knew nothing, and of which, considering its limited powers, it could never have known anything if left to itself. This the higher Intelligence discloses; this the inferior intelligence accepts. The act of acceptance we call faith. It is the evidence, and the only evidence, of things unseen.³ If the faith be real and true, questioning is at an end, and so is the process of arguing out toward conclusions; we perceive that we could never have discovered the truth for ourselves; we understand that

¹ Romans x. 17.

² Romans i. 5; xvi. 26.

³ Hebrews xi. 1.

it cannot be affected by any disputations of ours about it.

The reason is not limited to a mere assent to what is thus disclosed. In that case it would be but a registering machine ; its dignity, its rights, and its duty would be annulled. The legitimate work of the reason is two-fold : First, to verify the authority which demands its submission, and, secondly, having accepted the truth as revealed, to study it, to search out proofs from analogy, from congruence, from the facts of human nature ; to harmonize these axioms of knowledge with whatever man can discover by himself ; and to apply them to moral, social, and political problems. The reason illuminated by faith is equipped for a magnificent work, in confirmation, illustration, and application of principles which never change, and in which there is no variableness or shadow of turning.¹

And hence we see the superiority of the work done by the reason when loyal to Revelation and advancing on her royal path without the disadvantage of a false start, and the outcome of the efforts of that same reason when handicapped by the idea that it ought to try to do what it was not made to do, and that nothing is so laudable and seemly as to expend one's energies in making ineffectual clutches at what hangs beyond the reach.

But having made such claims for faith, I must proceed to point to a fatal error, that of applying

¹ James i. 17.

the sacred name to what are merely ratiocinations of mind. It is necessary to our argument that this should be done, because of the state of bewilderment in which we find many persons who profess and call themselves Christians, and really think that they believe. In fact, they do not believe, in the strict sense of the term. The acceptance of the Gospel on authority has not yet occurred, where the authority is that of the man's own conclusions, for in that case what he submits to is actually his own self. You say, "I believe." I ask, in what do you believe? Do you mean that you have arrived at, and are resting in, some conclusion which you accept because it seems to you reasonable and just? It may not seem so to another man; and you should not call that attitude of yours by the name of Catholic or Dogmatic Faith. If the object on which you are fixing your faith is an evolution of your own thought, or the result of the application of your own powers to religious problems, what are you leaning on but yourself? How do you differ from the heathen in the islands of the sea? He takes a bit of wood or stone and carves it into an image, and that is his god. You take better implements, a sharp wit and an incisive critical faculty, a volume or two of German philosophy, a handbook or two of physical science, and, possessed by preconceived notions, and in the prejudices of your blood and your time, you make your god. What is the difference? I cannot discern any; nor can I see why you

should call yourself a man of faith. Perhaps the work of the poor savage, who, at all events, is humble, may less offend the powers above us than that which is done in the studios of our dilettante theologues, where they scale down the Holy Scriptures, and turn out their fine artistic work in revision and correction of the Creed of the Holy Catholic Church.

Nor yet can a man in this way get a firm grip on the other world. His faith and his thought appear to be much the same. But the thought of to-day is not, certainly, the thought of the morrow. There is no guarantee that a faith which is the work of man, and comes by study, comparison, and conclusion, will be next year what it is now; he is over sanguine who expects such a thing. Men count on intellectual growth, as individuals and as a race: they learn, they take in new ideas. If the belief of to-day be the outcome of to-day's intellectual state, where shall be that faith, when the said intellectual state shall have been modified, changed, revolutionized? There is no warrant of permanence to such a faith. It cannot give assurance; it does not test obedience; it involves neither sacrifice nor submission. True faith implies submission to authority, and confers assurance as the reward. Now, then, that faith only is true which puts a man under subjection to Another, not himself; and none but that can give certitude and peace. And, therefore, what the rationalist understands by faith is not faith at



all, but something of the man himself; it is engendered in his inward parts; it exacts no submission; it guarantees no permanence in his religious history; he shrinks from the idea of expressing it in exact terms. And we see this every day; for the liberal Christian, while always boasting of his freedom, is evidently blown about by every wind, and tossed on waves of doubt. No one can tell how much he believes, or what; and he cannot tell himself, because he does not know.

And now we have reached the final question. Since no faith is true where there is not submission to an authority outside of him that believeth, what is that Authority which proposes to us men the object on which our faith must rest? It is, it can only be, Almighty God Himself, that God "in Whom we live and move and have our being, Who is not far from everyone of us;"¹ the Eternal, the Invisible, the One past searching out; the One Whose Name is mystery, "I AM THAT I AM."² He it is that speaks; He is the Revealer; He, between whom, as the Infinite, and creation as finite, there is essential distinction. I said that the reason has the right to verify the authority which demands its submission. I do not deny that when the Voice speaks, and "the faith which cometh by hearing" is demanded, we have a right to challenge the speaker, and ask who it is? Nor do we risk aught

¹ Acts xvii. 27, 28.

² Exodus iii. 14. "Ego Sum Qui Sum" (Vulgate).

in that admission. What God tells us is what man everlastingly desires to hear; what God offers is what man longs to possess. The Gospel—for that is the lovely name of the revelation of superrational and supernatural truth—came to no class in particular, but to every human being, and common-sense may be trusted with the question whether to hear or to refuse. For in this our life there are preambles to faith, dispositions toward faith, preparations for faith, which make it natural to believe, and unnatural to doubt, and unwise to lose time in quibbling and disputing, when, nature is crying out for God.

First, certain truths have been disclosed to all; and these set the reason to work, and make it a live reason and not a dead one. Such are the existence of God, His Eternal power, and the Moral Law. No one is left to gather that much of knowledge for himself; it is the common property of the race. Secondly, there are ineradicable convictions on the subject of our moral disorder, and a future retribution. Yea, moreover, spirit feeleth after spirit, and man is restless till he rest in his Creator. Our intuitions, our consciousness of sin, our sense of want, our solemn apprehension of a coming day of reckoning, draw men toward the point at which they must believe, because they cannot mistake the Voice which speaks. Men are naturally so constituted as to feel the need of a message from the other world; they are prepared for it in advance.



God once showed His face to man, in the long ago, when He created him in His own image; man has not forgotten, and cannot forget. And when God looks on us again, through the cloud which we have raised by our sin, we believe, because we can no more help it than we can help breathing. And we believe, not because of any poor work we have been doing, with our own rule and square, our plummet, diagrams, and school-boy demonstrations; but because it is the instinct of every healthful mind and heart to drink of the sources of immortal life. "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."¹ The instincts of humanity make ready the way of faith. "Faith cometh by hearing: and hearing by the Word of God."²

Yes—and as we say this, let us bend the head and bow the knee—by the WORD OF GOD. For "the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us."³ "God hath spoken to us, in these last days, by His Son."⁴ In visible form came that Son of God, speaking with a human voice, which voice was heard, in the ordinary way, by human ears. The faith, which gives "boldness" and "assurance," came first by hearing that Divine Word of God Incarnate. While the sceptics were exhibiting their poverty and nakedness, and the rationalists were running uncertainly and chasing the phantoms of

¹ S. Matt. v. 6.² Rom. x. 17.³ S. John i. 14.⁴ Hebrews i. 2.

their own creation, the poor, the meek, the sinners, and all who love truth in an honest and simple way, were hearing the Voice which rang forth clearly amid the discords of the world. It is of fact that the Speaker drew all men to Him, through the sense of their need and of his power. This was God showing Himself to men, when men most deeply felt that they could not live without the sight and knowledge of God; a sight and a knowledge to which philosophy had failed to attain. Historically, the result was what we know. The religion grew, it spread from nation to nation, it conquered with sign of more than earthly power; with lofty indifference to the wisdom, the spirit, the promise of the world. There is not, in it, a trace of the speculative, critical, or philosophical methods. Its founder said, "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."¹ To everyone who listened, and accepted the doctrine, He said in substance, "Blessed art thou, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven."² Flesh and Blood is man: and everlastingly is this true, that the knowledge of the Supernatural Order, and of our relation to it, cometh not by "flesh and blood," but is revealed to the flesh and blood by the powers above us. And men believed, because they must; because what they heard came right

¹ S. Matt. xi. 25.

² S. Matt. xvi. 17.



home; and in that faith in Jesus Christ they found assured knowledge and the peace which the world could not give.

It is a long time from that day to this; and yet the conditions to finding rest, assurance, and peace are exactly what they were. It is as true to-day as ever it was, that faith cometh by hearing; that what is heard is a voice; that the voice is that of the Word of God. One difference there is, and but one. The voice then spoke directly; now it speaks through an agency organized to tell forth its utterances from one generation to another. While Christ dwelt here on earth, visibly, faith came by hearing His own, His very voice. After He retired from view, faith came by hearing the "witnesses of His resurrection."¹ Those witnesses can never die; they live in their successors, as He promised, saying, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."² Faith in Jesus Christ, since He went away into heaven, has always rested on testimony; and the testimony to Jesus Christ is that which has been borne, these two thousand years almost, by the historic body which we know as the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. God was revealed in Christ; Christ is preached to us in His Church; God, Christ, and the Visible Church which is His Body: there is the authority which demands the submission of man. And Catholic Faith is that which first accepts the witness of the Living Body

¹ Acts i. 22.

² S. Matt. xxviii. 20.

to the Living Head and then accepts the witness of that Living Head, whose name is the Word of God, to the mysteries of that Order which is beyond our sight, and beyond our reach, toward which we press forward as to our eternal home.

I feel as if I ought to ask pardon for detaining you so long, or for trying to compress so much into so small a space. But perhaps in after years it may help some to recall the things that have now been said. Let me sum them up briefly.

Doubt and uncertainty are not characteristics of the Christian religion. When found among its professors they denote imperfection. Christianity means, lucid statement, exact definition, confidence in teaching, boldness against error, assurance of soul. It was so at first; it will be so always, unless the spiritual life is impaired. When Christianity ceases to be dogmatic, and leaves her children doubtful of the truth, it is as with Samson when his locks were shorn, when they cried, derisively, "The Philistines be upon thee," and he was helpless amid his foes.

But assurance comes by faith. And faith is then only real when it rests on an object outside the man.

The objects on which true faith is fixed belong to an Order inaccessible to the natural powers, and intelligible only through revelation.

The Agent in that revelation is the Incarnate Word of God. True faith is faith in Him; it includes instant assent to whatever He says, and com-



pliance with whatever He commands. He is ever present with us, as Teacher and Master. He speaks to us, in His Church. That Church is not a school of philosophy, but a witness to facts and a guardian of a body of doctrine revealed long ago. She has to repeat, without variation, the message entrusted to her care, and to call men everywhere to their Saviour and their God.

He who will hear, believe, and obey, shall so come to rest and peace. He shall be "stablished, strengthened, settled,"¹ firmly and joyfully, like those of old time, who said, in life, "I know whom I have believed,"² and as death drew near, exclaimed triumphantly, "I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."³ This is their reward, "the confidence of a certain faith, the comfort of a reasonable religious and holy hope."⁴ And these are the spiritual glories, the vital forces, and the supreme consolations which some forego, because too proud to take on them the yoke of the Gospel, and bend the knee before the oracles which proclaim the way of everlasting life.

I have two suggestions to make before I conclude. One relates to a phenomenon of the day; the other to a sophism of our adversaries.

First, do not be alarmed, or even surprised, at the world's unbelief. You know, perhaps, how many

¹ 1 Peter v. 10.

² 2 Tim. i. 12.

³ 2 Tim. iv. 8; 8. ⁴ Office of the Visitation of the Sick.

are alienated from God and the Church. Fret not yourselves because of this. Such men were here, in the Saviour's day; they disputed with Him, resisted Him, and even, at last, put Him to death. Such men are in the world now. Argument is useless where there is no common ground from which to start. No man can receive the sayings of the Lord unless he is inwardly prepared for their reception, as the good soil for the seed to be sown; and there are conditions, intellectual and moral, which put men, for the time, beyond the reach of the helping hand. Remember, that the faith which overcometh the world, is itself a divine gift: "by grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."¹ If that be so, it is not the business of man to try and evolve from within himself, by his own efforts, the spiritual power; but it *is* his business to see that he do nothing, say nothing, think nothing which may tend to shut out the light, or to unfit him for the visitation and the gift of God. Nothing blinds men so effectually as reliance on their own opinions; mistaking darkness for light, is the sin of this day; it was the sin of the ancient enemies of the Lord. "If ye were blind," said He to them, "ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see, therefore your sin remaineth."²

And next let me refer to an objection by which men seek to overturn our position. "You accuse us," they say, "of rationalizing. You do the same.

¹ Ephes. ii. 8.

² S. John ix. 41.

For you concede that the reason must judge of the authority, and verify the credentials presented. Now if this be so, the final submission rests on a conclusion of the reason, regarding the authority to which it yields, and your process also is but rationalism after all." The objection is a plausible one, but sophistical. Undoubtedly, when challenged by a Power demanding surrender, a man has a right to ask, "Who art thou, that I should yield?" And the Lord shrunk not from such a test of His claim, for He said, "Search the Scriptures, for they testify of Me." But there is a great difference between a temper which resolves from the outset to admit no master, but to go on by itself, carrying out its own theories to the logical end, and the spirit which, confessing its need of help, is only waiting to find the authority which has the right to command. The difference between men in these two states is one not merely of degree, but of essential quality. Each reasons, but on lines of perpetual divergence. It is true that, in a certain sense, the man of faith does rationalize; but his thought and intention are diametrically opposite to those of the sceptic and the philosopher; for he uses his reason to disclose and identify that Being who shall teach him a truth which he knows he cannot teach himself. Let me illustrate the difference and so make reply to the objection raised. Two men, travelling in unknown places, come to a point at which half a dozen roads meet. Which path shall they take? There stands,

in the midst of this confusion, a guide-post. One of our travellers says: "What need of a guide-post? They are relics of superstition. My intelligence is guide sufficient: I shall reason this thing out for myself, and trust to my private judgment alone to discover which is the right road." The other says: "I know not where I am: unaided I cannot find out. But yonder is a guide-post. I conclude that it was put there to help people in my plight; and my reason tells me that it will be wise to take the path which it indicates. I do so, without further question, and I shall walk straight on without fear, relying on that which I have read." Both these men reason; the one in presumption, the other in humility; the one as wise, the other as a fool. The process is one; but the spirit is essentially different. And this is the difference between the reason rightly used and the reason abused. In the one case the spring of action is independence, in the other it is diffidence. One man is locked up within himself, in a supreme conceit of his own sufficiency: the other is lifted out of himself, to see "the King in His beauty, and the land which is very far off."¹

My dear young brethren, one parting word to you. "Exhort young men to be sober-minded," saith the Apostle.² If you hope to escape the "corruption which is in the world through lust,"³ you must keep the heart pure and the head steady. It pertains to

¹ Isaiah xxxiii. 17.

² Titus ii. 6.

³ 2 Peter i. 4.

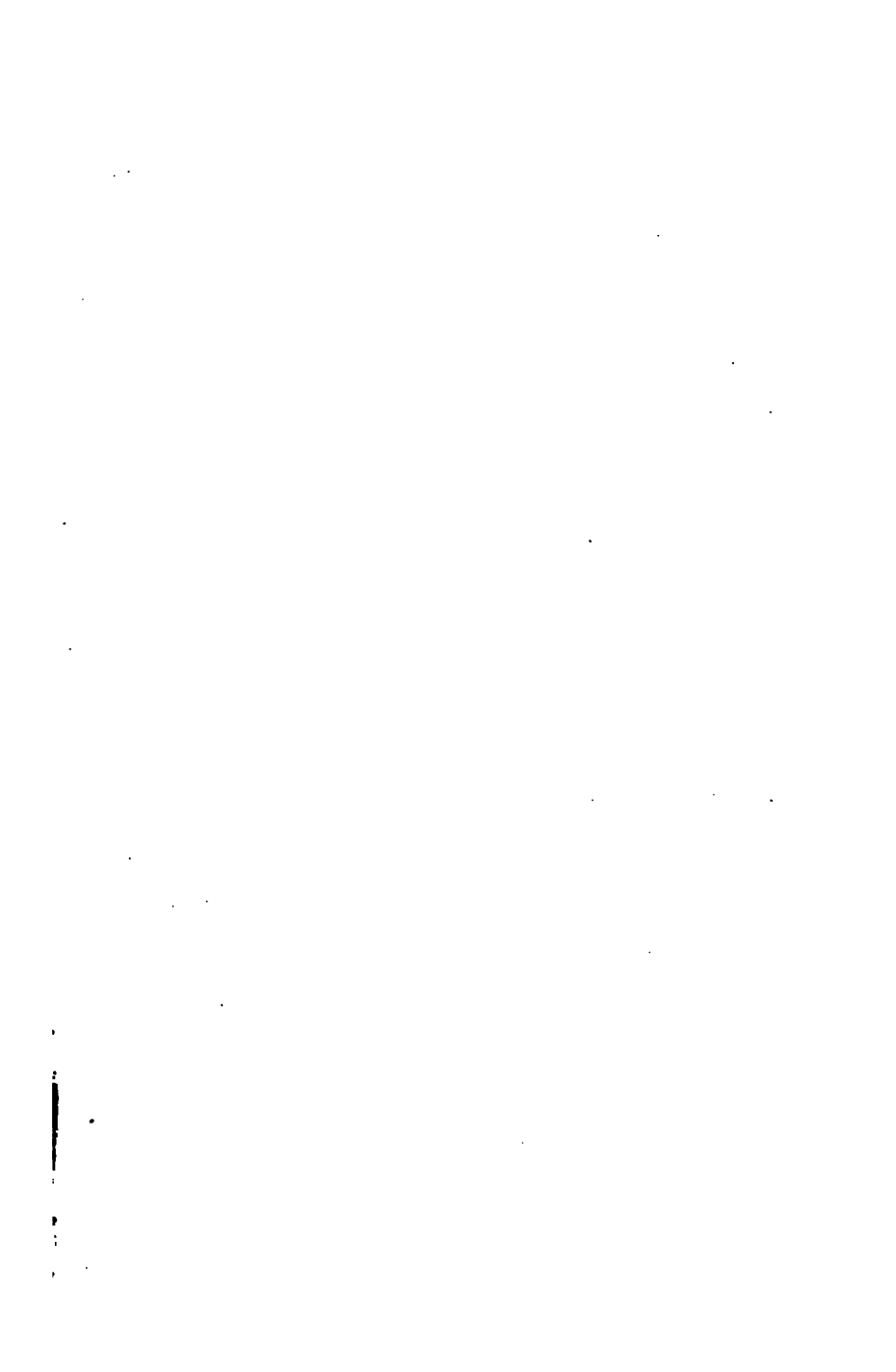
sobriety of mind to admit frankly that there are laws of God which limit thought as well as laws which limit act. Take this from your preacher, as a statement which your own observation will confirm hereafter, that the maximum of doubt is the minimum of religion, and that the minimum of religion is the maximum of immorality. Take this from him as an axiom, that there are things which the human reason cannot do. It cannot discover, by itself, what is behind the Veil ; and yet, on your full and assured knowledge of what is behind it depends your knowledge of yourself, of your place in God's universe, of the highest good attainable in life, of the port to which you are bound across the sea of time. There is that above, around, beneath, within, which you can neither prove nor disprove ; but you can know it by faith ; and that faith is the condition to knowledge of self, of duty, and of destiny. But why do I offer you these suggestions ? Such thoughts as these cannot be new to you ; they must have been awakened already, by the words of your wise and religious teachers in this Christian University. What augury of good in the name ! A Christian University ! A University of the Church ! A nursing mother of pure, high-toned, and thoughtful sons ! A school where the doors of Science, Art, Philosophy, and Letters are thrown wide open to eager youth ; where they may learn the wonder and the glory of the Visible ; where they also learn to reverence the Invisible. Before us a Veil is drawn which closes

up the mortal and finite scene ; from it are heard voices of another sphere, to which this life draws forward as the river to the open sea. In studies hallowed by Religion, the mind is led from point to point, till it becomes that magnificent power which an unabused intellect must be ; having scanned the lordly works, it discerns as its highest duty that of worshipping their Divine Creator. The knowledge of the arts, science, and philosophy, wrongly attained, disposes to doubt and may lead down to utter darkness. But work done as it must be done in a Christian University, hath promise of this world and of that which is to come. Such work is good and profitable to men ; and they who have been trained under such inspirations are, under God, the saviors of Society, and the true benefactors of our race. Nor shall the world, at any stage of its progress, fail to hear that confession which has been uttered by the profoundest thinkers, the most accomplished scholars, and the holiest souls of ages past, and shall be repeated to the end ; that confession which marks the sum and terminus of intellectual advance : “ We have seen the glory and wonder of Creation ; we have deeply studied Nature, we have mastered hard problems ; we have made discoveries all along the road ; yet we see, at last, greater things than these. Behold, we see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the Right Hand of God.”





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**This book is under no circumstances to be
taken from the Building**

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